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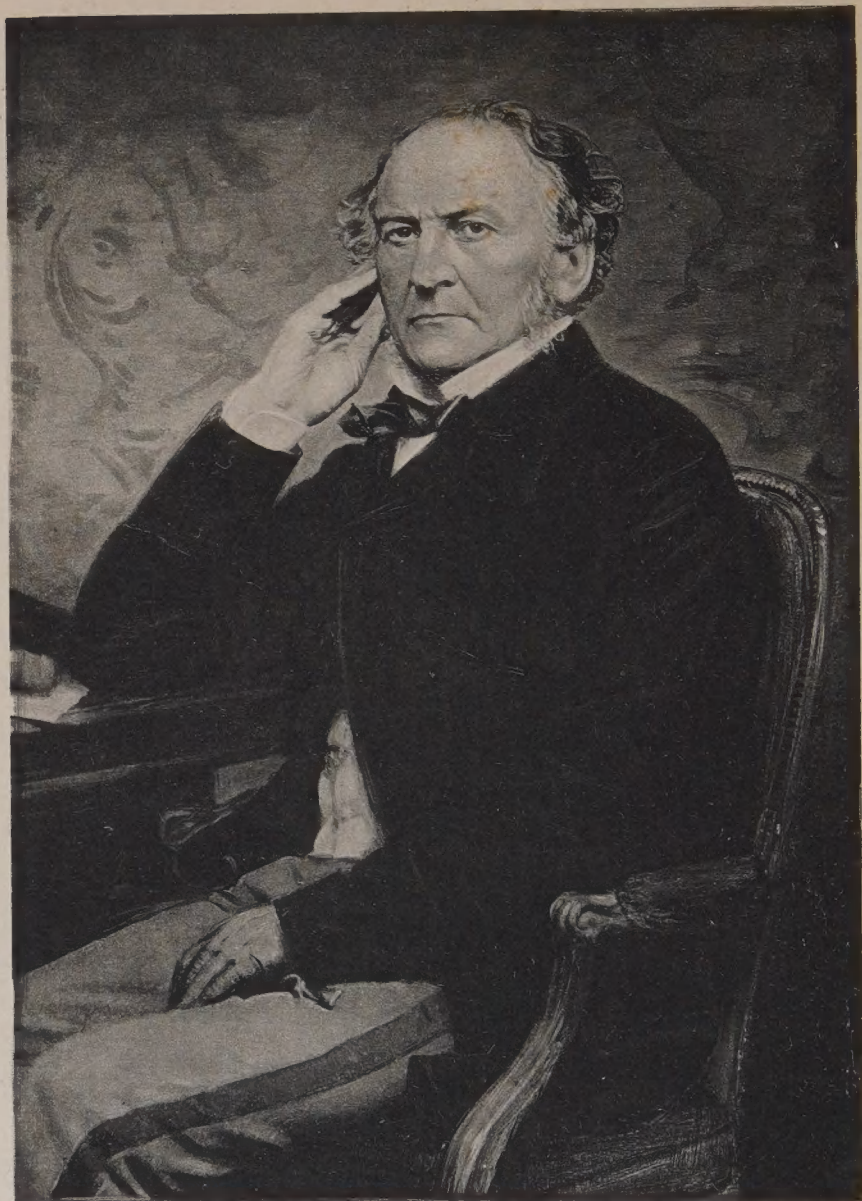
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RECOLLECTIONS

1832 to 1886

VOL. II.





Walker & Boutall, p. 50.

The Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P.

RECOLLECTIONS

1832 to 1886

BY THE RIGHT HON.

SIR ALGERNON WEST, K.C.B.

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.

THE BRITISH LIBRARY

LONDON

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From a drawing by the Marchioness of Granby.

RECOLLECTIONS

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1871-1872

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IN 1871 Sir Henry Bulwer, the younger brother of Lord Lytton, was raised to the Peerage as Lord Dalling, and consequently vacated his seat in the House of Commons.

I was talking to Mr. Gladstone at that time as to who would follow George Glyn as Whip when he succeeded to his father's title. Shortly

afterwards, when I had returned to Downing Street, George came and proposed to me, from Mr. Gladstone, that I should go into Parliament for Coventry, which Sir Henry Bulwer would vacate, and succeed him as Whip. It did not take me a moment to see and say how the *res angusta domi* would make such an idea impossible; but it took many moments and many days to put out of my head a proposal which, had it been practical, would have given me and my wife the greatest pleasure—for Parliament then represented the height of my ambition.

On May 6 I dined at an interesting literary dinner at Edward Levy's, who was the editor of the 'Daily Telegraph.' Among the guests were two men whom I was very glad to see—Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton and Wilkie Collins. Henry James, who had not been very long in Parliament, was also there. On the previous Wednesday he had made an excellent speech on the question of Female Suffrage, in which he had told Mr. Gladstone, who I suppose he thought was coquetting with the subject, that fame had no present and popularity no future. Henry Calcraft was there, who

did not know who Henry James was, and in spite of my kicks under the table, found fault with the speech, saying that the speaker had cribbed a quotation from Southey and pretended it was his own. This was more than Henry James could bear, and he told us, to Henry Calcraft's surprise, that he had not attempted to pass the quotation as his own, but had stated it was Southey's. He was very good-natured, however, about it, and we all parted the best of friends.

It had not been a happy session. Abolition of Purchase in the Army, good in itself, had been carried by the very high-handed proceeding of a Royal Warrant. Mr. Lowe's Budget, which had great merits, had to be withdrawn. Nothing could be more astute than the means adopted to ensure the defeat of his match tax. All the girls employed in the business were summarily dismissed from their employment, and were, by the manufacturers, put into vans, which formed a procession on the Embankment. People were always ready, without inquiry into facts, to take the sentimental view of the question, and the tax was abandoned; indeed, it might be said that the

Budget was withdrawn, and with it Mr. Bruce's admirable Licensing Bill, which succeeding generations have had bitter cause to regret.

We were interested and amused by the progress of the Tichborne trial, the Franco-German war was perpetually before us, and the cowardly horrors of the Commune were in full blast.

M. Thiers came over here and had an interview with Lord Granville, who after a time was struck by the absolute silence with which he received his remarks ; but he found that, overcome with the fatigues of his journey, the old diplomatist was wrapped in a deep slumber, from which he was only awakened by a not altogether unintentional fall of the fire-irons.

It was at Nocton, in the early seventies, where for the last time I took part in a great *battue*. After dinner the head of game shot by each gun was brought into the dining-room. I hung my head as the numbers were read out, and determined never to shoot again. My case was not unlike what happened to Mr. Frank Sneyd, who was not very successfully pheasant-shooting, when he heard the head keeper shouting out to his various subordinates : ' No hens to be

shot in these spinneys. You need not tell Mr. Sneyd.' That, I believe, was his last day's shooting; and for reasons equally obvious I gave up the noble sport.

At Somerley we used constantly to meet Tom Price, a great friend of the Barrington family, a fine rider, and very greedy.

One day, eating a good dinner, he said: 'This is my idea of heaven.' 'Yes,' said a neighbour; 'such a dinner as this, without money and without price!'

He always reminded me of the greedy man who, coming downstairs in the morning before breakfast, said, 'Food has not passed my lips since last night, and to-morrow will be the third day.' But he had many good qualities.

It was in December 1871 that the Prince of Wales was seized with a severe attack of typhoid fever, and his death was expected from day to day. Mr. Gladstone was summoned to London, and I came up from Somerley, where I was staying, to meet him in the dull, dark days of a London winter. We anxiously waited for news, every moment expecting the Prince's death. He, however, happily recovered, and

early in 1872 there was a great ceremony of thanksgiving in St. Paul's Cathedral, where, as Gentleman Usher of the Privy Chamber, I had to receive the Speaker of the House of Commons at the door and take him to his seat. I then stood by him and Mr. Gladstone, just in front of the royal pew.

The celebrated Tichborne case was proceeding in January 1872, when Sir William Bovill, Chief Justice of Common Pleas, in whose court it was being tried, wrote to me as follows :

Sessions House, Westminster :
January 15, 1872.

‘ Dear Sir,—The enclosed letter has every indication of being genuine, but before taking any notice of it I shall be glad to know from you by my messenger whether it is a genuine letter and bears your actual signature.

‘ Yours faithfully,

‘ WM. BOVILL.’

Algernon West, Esq.,

Secretary to the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone.

10 Downing Street: January 13, 1872.

‘ Sir,—I this morning received directions from Mr. Gladstone, who is at present out of

town, to communicate with you in reference to the protracted trial over which you preside. Mr. Gladstone says :

‘ “ In common with several of my colleagues, with whom I spoke on the subject when last in town, I have regarded with painful feelings the course of proceeding in the (Tichborne) case. The administration of justice is a matter of great and common concern, and the process of obtaining justice ought to be cheap, easy, and effectual. Here the latter is so much the reverse, that not only may a public scandal be caused at home, but we cannot fail to become a bye-word to all civilised nations.”

‘ Mr. Gladstone adds that he is aware you are not in any sense responsible for a state of things which is a blot upon our civil jurisprudence, but he thinks that an early and public expression of your and perhaps his opinion, from the high position you occupy, would tend to remedy a state of things which threatens to result in a virtual denial of justice ; and that the resumption of the trial would be a not unfitting opportunity for this expression of opinion.

‘I am to add that Mr. Gladstone would himself have written were he in town, as he desires this letter to be considered official.

‘I have the honour to remain, Sir,

‘Your very obedient servant,

‘ALGERNON WEST.’

The Lord Chief Justice Bovill.

I went down to Westminster Sessions House, and found that on the receipt of this very obvious forgery Sir William had summoned all the judges within reach, to consult on this unprecedented interference with the judicial bench. One of the learned judges, however, wiser than his fellows, suggested that it might possibly be better to inquire if the letter was really authentic before considering the grave constitutional question. Of course I said it was a forgery ; but I was never able to discover its author, or how he succeeded in obtaining the Treasury official note-paper on which the letter was written. It was of Sir William that Serjeant Ballantine is reported to have said that ‘with a little more experience Bovill would be the worst judge on the bench.’

In March General Ashburnham, a great friend of ours, whom we constantly met at Frognal, died.

I was anxious to get something at the sale of his furniture as a memento, and I chose an armchair which I pointed out to Lord Granville, who said it was unfortunate, as he particularly wanted it; so I innocently gave way, and in the evening the chair arrived at our house, with a note from Lord Granville saying it was to be Horace's, as a recollection of his old friend 'T. A.'

In March 1872 I got up a great farewell dinner to Northbrook on his departure to India as Governor-General. It was held at the Buckingham Palace Hotel, and was an extraordinary success, Dufferin proposing Northbrook's health in language of exquisite felicity.

In April Lady Caroline Barrington was in charge of the Prince and Princess of Wales's children at Chiswick, and our children, Constance and Bill, went to stay there with them. We spent some evenings in that historical house, and saw the room in which Charles James Fox died.

About this time Dufferin offered me, through my wife, the clerkship to the Council of the Duchy of Lancaster, which, after some consideration, I declined, as I felt that it would be too much of a backwater, and that my prospects of advancement would not be improved by accepting it.

Dufferin wrote : ‘ It is very vexatious to think that the one bit of patronage that I have ever had at my disposal, instead of going to a dear friend and one so eminently qualified to hold it, should fall into the possession of a stranger to me.’

Just after this, Dufferin went to Canada as Governor-General, to his great delight ; and Mr. Gladstone became provisionally Chancellor of the Duchy.

It was in May that, dining at the Dufferins before he started, we met for the last time the beautiful Mrs. Norton ; but she was not alone in her beauty, for others of the Sheridan family were there (Lady Hermione and her lovely daughters) to enter into competition with her, with all the glorious advantages of youth.

On Mr. Denison’s retirement from the

Speakership in 1872, Mr. Brand was elected. When Mr. Disraeli was acquainted with the choice of the Government, he is reported to have said: 'I dare say he is a very good man, but I don't happen ever to have seen him.'

The choice was soon justified, and Mr. Brand filled his high office with judgment and dignity. I once asked him if he had ever known or heard of money passing in our time for the vote of a member. He said: 'No, never. The nearest approach to it I have ever known was our finding a suit of clothes for an M.P. who stated that without them he would not be able to attend the House at a critical division.'

On Saturday, June 15, a hot day, the Cabinet was summoned at 11 o'clock to await the decision of the Alabama Court from Geneva. After they had been waiting in vain for some hours, Lord Granville put his head into my room and said: 'We shall inevitably quarrel if we are kept much longer waiting with nothing to do. Can you get me a chess-board?' I went downstairs and found my daughter Constance had one, which I produced, and on which Mr.

Forster and Lord Granville played for hours on the terrace, the rest looking on.

This episode, depicted by the clever pencil of the late Mr. Fairfield in the sketch reproduced opposite, is narrated in Forster's biography, and I am still the happy possessor of the historical chess-board. The Cabinet sat till dinner time, but the news never came till Sunday.

It was during the process of the Alabama difficulties that I made the acquaintance of Sir John Rose. He had had an interesting and varied career, having begun life as a local schoolmaster in Canada, and had fought in the rebellion of 1837 as a volunteer, after which, having been called to the Bar in 1842, and practising at Montreal, he became the leading authority in Commercial Law. Later on he was made Solicitor-General and Minister of Public Works, and in 1864 was appointed commissioner for the negotiation of the Oregon claims. In 1869 he was made special commissioner in connection with the Alabama claim, and assisted in the settlement happily effected by the Washington treaty of 1870.

While the latter negotiations were going on



WAITING FOR THE VERDICT.

1. MR. GOSCHEN.
2. MR. CARDWELL.
3. MR. H. A. BRUCE.
4. DUKE OF ARGYLL.
5. MARQUESS OF RIPON.
6. MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON.
7. VISCOUNT HALIFAX.

8. EARL OF KIMBERLEY.
9. MR. GLADSTONE.
10. EARL GRANVILLE.
11. MR. W. E. FORSTER.
12. LORD HATHERLEY.
13. MR. STANSFELD.

we were in constant confidential communication, and the acquaintance then formed with Sir John and Lady Rose ripened into a friendship only ending with their deaths, which, curiously enough, were both very sudden. I was out driving with her at Loseley only a few days before she died; and on the very day, some years later, that I received a letter from him, begging me to join him in Scotland, came the news of his death, which occurred whilst stalking in the Duke of Portland's forest at Langwell. There was no pain to him in his death; that was reserved to us, for a better or kinder friend never lived. Dr. Quain told us afterwards that he had a weak heart, and should not have gone out stalking. He was buried in the cemetery at Guildford, and laid by the side of his wife, many of his friends following him to the grave with aching hearts. As for Lady Rose, I have in a long life met many women I thought clever, but never one so clever as she was, or with such a genius for society.

One evening after dinner we went into their drawing-room at Loseley, the ceiling of which was decorated with a cockatrice on each panel.

‘I don’t know,’ said Welby, ‘what a cockatrice is.’ ‘I little thought,’ I said, ‘that a *gourmet* like you would avow your ignorance of the existence of a “poulet au riz.”’

In this year there was published a scurrilous pamphlet entitled ‘What does she do with it?’ by ‘Solomon Temple,’ reflecting on the Queen and the Civil List. It was supposed to have been written anonymously by someone in a high position, and I had a great deal of work in connection with answering all the charges made; but the answer was complete.

I was also concerned in some very complicated negotiations between Mr. Hooker, the Director of Kew Gardens, and Mr. Ayrton, the First Commissioner of Works, who had quarrelled. Ayrton had an evil tongue, but I confess that I thought him the more reasonable man of the two. He was complimentary to me in the House of Commons when the subject was discussed; and on Mr. Bernal Osborne sneering at my attempt to make peace, Mr. Gladstone spoke most eulogistically of the part I had taken in the matter.

Before the session was over arose what was

unfairly called the Collier scandal, for which Mr. Gladstone could only justly be blamed as a consenting party.

In a previous session a Bill had been passed by which it was enacted that no one should be appointed a Lord of Appeal without having first served as a Judge in the Common Pleas.

It was proposed now that Sir Robert Collier should be passed *straight* through the Common Pleas, thus complying with the letter of the law only.

I foresaw that Mr. Gladstone would suffer heavily if this were done ; and though it was no particular business of mine, I implored George Glyn to interpose. He only said : ‘ I suppose you know better than Mr. Gladstone.’ ‘ Well, at any rate,’ I answered, ‘ I am what Sydney Smith used to call a “good foolometer.” ’ And I went up and argued the case with Mr. Gladstone, who was most kind and attentive, but did not see it with my eyes, and the most was made of what was not a scandal but a grave error. It had not even the elements of a job in it, for Sir Robert Collier was a great loss to the

Government as a law adviser, and the seat he held was lost to the Liberal party.

Then followed another mistake, which was naturally taken advantage of by the Opposition : Mr. Harvey, a Cambridge man, was appointed to the Rectory of Ewelme. The statutes laid down that the Rector must be a member of the Oxford Convocation, but he had been educated at Cambridge, and was only subsequently made a member of the Oxford Convocation to satisfy the statute.

These two events, small in themselves, did enormous damage to the Government.

Bobsy Meade used humorously to say that if everything were submitted to a cabinet of private secretaries, most of the blunders committed by Government would be avoided. Of course he said it jokingly, but in the joke lay some truth on the principle that 'onlookers see most of the game.'

One evening in August we had been dining, as we often did, in the garden of Downing Street, and were standing on the terrace when Mr. Gladstone told me that he proposed to appoint me in poor [†]Sir Alexander Duff-Gordon's place

to a commissionership of Inland Revenue. As public speakers say, it was 'with very mingled feelings' that I received the announcement. It was a very sad moment to feel that my private secretaryship was drawing to a close. Next to being in the Cabinet, to be private secretary to a great leader like Mr. Gladstone is, in my opinion, the most desirable of offices—provided the private secretary enjoys, as I am happy to say I did, the absolute confidence of his master. No one ever before had one so kind, so trusting, and so generous—I will not say considerate in the ordinary acceptation of the term, but thoroughly appreciative: he worked hard himself and always expected that those under him should do so too.

After nearly four years of delightful and confidential intercourse with the greatest man of this or probably any other age, the end was indeed inexpressibly sad. During that time he had always let me talk to him freely on every subject. He had argued matters with me often as an equal, with great earnestness, yet, with all his knowledge and experience, modestly, and ever ready to make allowances for the many shortcomings

with which I must often have tried him. And yet throughout that period I never knew him lose his temper, and cannot recollect a hard thing he ever spoke of his bitterest opponents, or even of friends who deserted and vilified the man upon whom they had fawned, though he had covered them with honours and titles.

I lay the flattering unction to my soul that he was a little sorry too, for he wrote to Her Majesty as follows :

‘ Mr. West obtains a well-deserved reward for much arduous labour admirably performed ; but the office he takes is a working one and absolutely requires the surrender of the private secretaryship, to Mr. Gladstone’s great concern and not small embarrassment.’

The ‘ Times ’ also commented on my appointment in the following appreciative terms :

‘ None who do not know can form an adequate idea of the responsibility necessarily thrown upon the private secretary of a Cabinet Minister, or the anxiety and labour the office entails ; the salary would not repay a second-class clerk in a great mercantile establishment, and until a proper provision is made for this highest kind of

confidential service, such appointments as that now conferred upon Mr. Algernon West must be regarded as only a tardy repayment for good and hard work insufficiently rewarded.'

Towards the end of the session I asked Mr. Gladstone to look through a history I had written of Sir Charles Wood's Indian Administration; and sought his opinion as to whether I should make an attempt to write something on the same lines about the 1868 Government.

He promised to read it and tell me what he thought, a promise which he fulfilled in the following letter:

Hawarden Castle, Chester :

August 21, 1872.

'My dear West,—I have read your book on Lord Halifax's Indian Administration with great interest, and I am indebted to it not only for much information, but for a far fuller and greater view of his merits as an Indian Minister.

'Your question to me, I think, was whether I thought (after reading it) that you were competent to write a narrative of the principal proceedings of the present Government—or of its

Irish legislation. Correct me if I do not report your inquiry accurately.

‘I should answer without doubt in the affirmative. But I think there is one danger against which you would require to be more on your guard than was necessary in dealing with the unimpassioned question of India. You would have to expel from your mind for the time the spirit of sympathy and friendship and to place everything as far as possible in an abundance of daylight. The danger I refer to besets you not as A. E. W., but as a contemporary writer. These narratives close on the heels of the event are very difficult, though not impossible. If you succeeded in your second task as well as in the first, it would do you much honour.

‘Yours sincerely,

‘W. E. GLADSTONE.’

CHAPTER XII

MR. GLADSTONE

AND so the time was come when I should have to leave the great Prime Minister who was 'not in the roll with common men'—who had won success almost from his cradle; at three years old, as he often told me, he had babbled out a few lisping words standing on his father's dining-table, on the occasion of Mr. Canning's successful election for Liverpool in 1812. At Eton, the friend of Lord Canning, Milnes Gaskell, Hope Scott, Gerald Wellesley, and Arthur Hallam, he had foreshadowed his future career; at Oxford, in competition with a larger body of distinguished men, he had taken the highest honours; when only twenty-three years of age he had entered Parliament on the Duke of Newcastle's recommendation, and after a hard

fight had reconquered for the Tory party the borough of Newark. He soon attracted more attention than usually falls to the lot of the young members of the House of Commons, and Mrs. Gladstone told me of a letter written by William IV. to Lord Althorp and published in his Life, in which the King had noticed and admired an early speech of her husband's.

In Peel's great Government of 1841 Mr. Gladstone, who had been a Junior Lord of the Treasury in 1834-35, became Vice-President of the Board of Trade, and was informed by the Prime Minister that he would learn everything connected with the business of his department from the President, from whom, Mr. Gladstone has frequently told me, he learnt absolutely nothing; but from his own application and labour he learnt much, and amongst other things the blessings likely to accrue to the country by the abolition of protective duties on corn.

At the Board of Trade some Chinese despatches came before him, in which the Prime Minister of that country argued that foreign ships should not be admitted to Chinese waters; but, he added, 'some of these ships conveyed

corn, and it would be madness to exclude what would cheapen the food of the people from their ports.' And these words of Oriental wisdom had influenced Mr. Gladstone's mind in the direction of Free Trade.

In 1843 he first entered the Cabinet as President of the Board of Trade, a position which he resigned in 1845 on the Maynooth question, Disraeli declaring that his career was over. With advancing years, we learn, too late perhaps, the folly of all, particularly political, prophecies.

In the September of 1845 Mr. Gladstone—who had vacated his seat for Newark, disagreeing on the question of Free Trade with the personage then called the Patron of the Borough, the Duke of Newcastle—re-entered the Cabinet as Secretary of State for the Colonies without a seat in Parliament.

In 1847 he had become member for the University of Oxford.

He was Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Governments of Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston, at whose death he had led the House of Commons; he had shown himself to be

an accomplished orator : the mellowness and modulation of his voice, tinged with the slight Lancashire burr which never deserted him, had already delighted and fascinated the House of Commons.

Lord Macaulay has told us how in the early morning, when Mr. Disraeli, having replied at the close of the debate on the Budget of 1852, sat down, 'one greater than he arose—Mr. Gladstone bounded on the floor amidst a storm of cheers such as the walls of Parliament had never heard. His oration in a single day doubled his influence in Parliament and his popularity in the country'—all this was known to the veriest tyro in political knowledge ; but notwithstanding his great reputation, all his successes, and all his triumphs, he was still in 1868 looked upon by those who belonged to what were then called 'the governing families' of the country, with the notable exception of Lord Granville, and perhaps Lord Russell, as an 'outsider,' so to speak. I recollect one of them saying to me : 'He is a wonderful man, no doubt ; but so is a Japanese conjurer.'

A great Yorkshire squire described him in

hunting slang as 'not having been bred in their kennel.'

'If Mr. Gladstone,' wrote a Whig magnate, 'thinks he can lead the House of Commons with the force of the millions without the goodwill of the ten thousand, he will find his mistake.'

Mr. Bagehot, a keen political observer, had said it was impossible to calculate what his future course would be. His great Budget had been described by an old Whig as 'Oxford on the surface, and Liverpool below.'

The Tories feared and hated him; the Church, with a few notable exceptions, opposed him; Oxford University had thrust him out; the old Whig party had not forgotten his opposition in past years; the Nonconformists disliked his Church views. Even in his financial triumph of 1860 they of his own household were opposed to him. The readers of Greville's 'Memoirs' will recollect how 'Clarendon shook his head, and pronounced against the French Treaty, and the "Times" thundered against it.' Lord Palmerston and Sir George Cornwall Lewis were always secretly, when not openly, opposed to him on matters of finance. Charles Greville,

himself no mean representative of the governing families, described him in 1860 as having 'a fervent imagination which furnishes facts and arguments in support of them: he is an audacious innovator because he has an insatiable desire for popularity, and in his notions of government he is a far more sincere Republican than Bright, for his ungratified personal vanity makes him wish to subvert the institutions and the classes that stand in the way of his ambition.'

And yet so overwhelming was his personality and his force that he was in 1868, by the voice of the people, chosen to be Prime Minister by an enormous majority of the votes of his countrymen. As John Morley tells us, Dr. Johnson said of the elder Pitt, 'he was a minister given by the people to the King,' and rarely as, we are told, it happens, 'Parliamentary life admitted the autocratic supremacy of his original intellect.' If this be true, Mr. Gladstone was only reaching his zenith at nearly sixty years of age; and at the time of his becoming the most powerful Prime Minister of our day, I had had the rare good fortune to be associated with him, and had

the opportunity, at any rate, of seeing behind the veil of his wonderful and subtle character. From that hour there remained, and will ever remain with me, an intense love and admiration of his enormous powers, of his marvellous memory, of his splendid oratory, of his personal kindness, and of his touching modesty.

It was soon after my first acquaintance with Mr. Gladstone that he told me how impossible it was for a Minister and his secretary adequately to perform their respective duties unless there was established between them such an absolute confidence as in a happy domestic life should exist between a man and his wife. I hope I have never betrayed that confidence which he so fully bestowed on me, and which extended to the last days of his existence. After all the long years of close intimacy, private and official, I have never felt capable of adequately depicting a hundredth part of his complex character, so great and so vast, that to understand it is necessary to divide it.

Through every phase, in every action and every thought was abundantly apparent a deep sense of religion; indeed, it was to his life what

the Nile is to Egypt, what sunshine is to the world.

Languor was not in his heart,
Weakness was not in his word,
Weariness not on his brow.

He was possessed of an imperious vitality, and what Burke called a 'quadrumanous activity' which penetrated into every office of the State; and through it all stood out his old conservatism in the truest sense of the word: his devotion to old traditions and constitutional forms; his loyalty to the Crown; while with this devotion was joined a courtesy most reverential to the Queen, and an affection for the royal family which was most touching. The world perhaps does not know that it was largely owing to his negotiations as leader of the Liberal party that the Royal Grants were so satisfactorily arranged in the House of Commons in 1889.

William Gurdon, who had been my colleague and knew him well, said that he approached every new question, first from a Tory point of view, and after some consideration would come round to seeing it from a Liberal point of view. Even in small details his conservatism was

apparent. George Lefevre once told me that when as First Commissioner of Works he put before Mr. Gladstone his plan for the widening of Parliament Street, the latter deprecated very strongly the destruction of King Street, simply because it was an ancient landmark of London, and should be preserved for that reason.

It has been said and repeated a hundred times that Lord Beaconsfield understood men, but that Mr. Gladstone understood mankind; as Monckton Milnes said of the first: 'Knew not mankind, but keenly knew all men;' and of the latter: 'Knew naught of men, but knew and loved mankind.'

I have my own doubts as to the truth of this generally accepted proposition, for from numberless conversations with him, I was able to see how shrewd was his criticism and appreciation of public men. He always, I admit, took the highest view that was possible, and believed in them till he was persuaded to the contrary.

Talking on this subject long after his departure from the Liberal party, Mr. Chamberlain said Mr. Gladstone was no judge of men;

but then he generously added : ‘ When a man is on a high eminence he looks down and sees men moving below him, but from his great height he does not distinguish between those that are tall and those of lesser stature.’

As an instance of his Parliamentary intuition and judgment of character I may notice that when the game of obstruction began to be practised in the House of Commons by some of the Tory left wing, a friend walking home with Mr. Gladstone asked him if he did not think it very serious.

‘ Not at present,’ he said ; ‘ for these obstructionists are all *au fond* gentlemen, and will not press it to extremity ; but their example may be followed in the future by less scrupulous men, and then it may become dangerous.’

It was an intuition that made him select Sir Stafford Northcote, then an unknown man, as his private secretary, and he was the first to introduce him into Parliament as member for Dudley, a seat then controlled by Lord Ward, a Peelite.

He was also the first to appreciate the budding qualities of Lord Randolph Churchill,

while five of the most successful and prominent politicians¹ of the present day were all introduced into high office by Mr. Gladstone.

Lords Hampden and Peel, as Speakers, testify to his keen discernment of their qualifications; while among permanent officials I may surely point to Sir Robert Herbert, Sir Arthur Godley, and Mr. Theodore Walrond, who were all brought into the Civil Service by him, and to Lord Lingen and Lord Welby, who were both placed in the highest positions by his selection.

To say that Mr. Disraeli—who at once fascinated and delighted the Court and the populace with his idea of an Empress of India; who at the time of the Treaty of Berlin tickled the imagination of the people with visions of Oriental imperialism; who became the most popular Minister of the century, and almost its idol—was ignorant of mankind, seems to me to be almost grotesque.

Mr. Gladstone has been accused of being intolerant of those who differed from him, and of brushing aside with an energy approaching

¹ Lord Rosebery, Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Chamberlain, and Mr. John Morley.

to rudeness objections made to his own plans. This may have been quite true, when his mind was once definitely made up ; but I have never known a man who, while any matter was being discussed, was so patient in hearing and sifting objections to the bottom until he thought the truth was reached. And then he had a splendid boldness in dashing difficulties aside, thus following Lord Bacon's advice that in council it is good to see dangers—in execution not to see them. He acted on that famous maxim that a statesman should doubt to the last, and then act as if he had never doubted. In the hour of action he was like a great commander who, having matured plans after careful consideration, sees before him his enemy's citadel which he means to take, and becomes regardless and even scornful of timid counsels and timid advisers who point out to him ambuscades and obstacles which he means to, and does, overcome.

The comparison holds good in another aspect. Like many political personages, he has been accused of being heartless. Would not that criticism equally hold good in the case of

any great and successful general who in the fury of the battle sees his comrades shot down by his side, but has no time to waste in idle lamentations; indeed, he envies them the glorious opportunity of laying down their lives in the service of their country?

My own belief is that Mr. Gladstone early realised the fact that 'life has nobler uses than regret.' He believed that in every step he took throughout his career he had acted to the best of his abilities, and that there was no time to waste on idle retrospections.

His aim and work lay before him; and, like Colonel Hay's hero,

He saw his duty a straight, sure thing,
And went for it there and then.

He was

One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward;
Never doubted clouds would break;
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph;
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, sleep to wake.

The intense enthusiasm with which he entered into the subject and the object of the moment was apt to dim, if not obliterate, the little loves and affections which crowd the life

of smaller men. The execution of his great work was the one thing in his eyes, and the instruments and tools he used were dearer to him than anything else; and the men associated with him at the moment were always greater than the men who had passed away. He became absorbed in the task, whatever it might be, which he had set himself to do; he was not one of those who, having put their hand to the plough, knew what it was to turn back.

Mr. Lowe said to a friend of mine: 'Gladstone possesses no ideas—his ideas possess him.'

He would strongly condemn what he thought wrong, but he never imputed a bad motive to anyone, and his masterful temper was singularly combined with a proud modesty, which led him to shrink from any honour conferred upon himself; for here was the greatest Prime Minister of his day, who had created Dukes and Marquises, Earls and Viscounts and Barons galore, who had showered Garters and Ribands and Stars, who had bestowed Archbishoprics and Bishoprics, Viceroyalties, and Secretaryships of State—a commoner, without any title and without any rank.

We all know how, among the decorated statesmen who formed the dazzling assembly in Vienna, Talleyrand remarked of Lord Castle-reagh, who attended the conference without any decoration: 'Il est bien distingué.' And so it was with Mr. Gladstone, he was 'bien distingué;' as Macaulay said of Hampden: 'He was one of those great commoners whose plain prefix of "Mr." has to our ears a more majestic sound than the proudest of the feudal titles.'

Genius has been described in a thousand ways; but his genius it was to raise everything he touched to a higher level, and to leave the impress of his intellect on every person and every subject with whom he came in contact.

The late Lord Dalhousie, for whom Mr. Gladstone entertained a great affection, said to me that he had done infinite harm to him and his contemporaries by establishing a level so high as to make it impossible of attainment; yet I am sure he was the last man who would have wished 'to pare the mountain to the plain.'

Though Mr. Gladstone was consumed with

a devouring passion for liberty throughout the world—from the moment when in opening the doors of the dungeons to the Neapolitan prisoners he struck the first note of Italian independence, to the last moment of his life when he vainly raised his voice in behalf of the oppressed and murdered Armenians—foreign politics could rarely distract his attention from the more engrossing subjects of domestic and more especially financial importance; and so far did this distaste permeate his character that he was often lacking in sufficient appreciation of the heroic deeds of our sailors and soldiers, which fascinate at all times and seasons the belligerent imaginations of the most peaceful of Englishmen.

Mr. Gladstone's liberality, little heard of, while never exceeding the bounds of his income, was very great, and was curiously accompanied by his love of small economies—his determination to have the proper discount taken off the price of his second-hand books, his horror of a wasted half-sheet of note-paper, which almost equalled his detestation of a wasted minute; for his arrangement of every hour of the day, and

for the occupation of that hour, was extraordinary. There was never in his busy life an idle dawdle by the fire after luncheon, or a doze over a novel before dinner. Sauntering, as Lord Rosebery said, was an impossibility to him—mentally or physically; a walk meant four miles an hour sharp, and I remember his regretting the day when he could only go up the Duke of York's steps two at a time. When about to travel he would carefully pack his own despatch-box, so that the book or paper he was reading was uppermost and ready at a moment's notice to his hand.

In the ordinary acceptation of the phrase, Mr. Gladstone might be described as wanting in humour, but he certainly was not deficient in the rapier-like skill which he employed in the brightest of badinage (or may I call it chaff?) in the House of Commons.

If he was not ready to appreciate the fleeting witticisms which float around society, there were simple stories which he would tell and laugh at with a childlike enjoyment.

Two contradictory anecdotes of his humour and his want of appreciation of a joke occur to me.

‘Look,’ he said to his colleagues on the Bench, ‘at those two men ; which is the uglier ?’ They gave their opinion.

‘No,’ said he ; ‘you do not approach the question from the proper point. If you were to magnify your man he would, on a colossal scale, become dignified and even imposing ; but my man, the more you magnified him the meaner he would become.’

The Admiralty got into a great scrape by sending a condemned transport called the ‘Me-gæra’ to sea in spite of a report of unseaworthiness ; she sprang a leak and was beached.

During the debate which arose on it, Mr. Goschen, then First Lord of the Admiralty, tried to justify himself by emphasising the fact that the leak was very small.

Lord Young, who was Lord Advocate at the time, sat next Lowe, and said : ‘It is lucky it is a little one, because he’ll have to swallow it.’

Lowe repeated it to Mr. Gladstone, who never smiled, and evidently showed his want of appreciation of the joke, or disapproval of its frivolity at such a moment.

As a talker, he would pour out floods of in-

formation and eloquence, even on small points, probing deeper than anybody could desire into the origin of every subject, illustrating Joubert's axiom : ' To occupy ourselves with little things as with great, to be as fit and ready for the one as for the other, is not weakness and littleness but power and sufficiency.' But he would frequently become too much absorbed in the question to possess the gift of the conversationalist, whose highest art it is to give and take, and toss the ball to and fro lightly across the table, and be ' not only witty in himself, but the cause that wit is in other men.'

The subject was never difficult to find ; whatever it was, he was prepared fully to dilate on its minutest details.

Nothing demonstrated his modesty more than his criticism of sermons. It was constantly my lot to go to church with him, and I only once recollect his criticising adversely, as we lesser men habitually do, the sermon that he heard.

' A very notable sermon,' he would say to me ; or, ' A very remarkable reference that he made to Isaiah,' and so on. Once only, coming away from the Chapel Royal, he exclaimed against a

very beautiful sermon of Mr. White's of the Savoy, 'because,' he said, 'he has excited my brain by his quotations, and given me anything but the rest which is what I want and expect to find in church.'

Mr. Gladstone never omitted attending service twice every Sunday, and used always to hold me in small repute in being, as he termed it, a 'one-cer.'

Lord Rosebery, in his 'Life of Pitt,' tells us of a discussion which took place as to the quality most required in a statesman. One said eloquence; one knowledge; one toil; and Pitt said patience.

Surely Mr. Gladstone was endowed with all these qualities, but the fairy that presided at his birth denied him the gift of proportion.

He would often use the strength of a steam hammer to break a nut; he would treat a stupid interruption in a debate by an insignificant member of Parliament as solemnly as a weighty argument from a distinguished opponent; he would compare Lord Althorp to Oliver Cromwell, and I am not sure that he would not give the pre-eminence to the former.

I never feared to approach and even to remonstrate with him on any important subject, but I was terrified at the look and words of intense annoyance which were sure to be elicited by some silly little request from an ardent admirer to put his signature to a photograph or a book.

Sir Edward Hamilton, in his excellent monograph on Mr. Gladstone, talks of his credulity, and he certainly possessed an extraordinary gift of believing, and sincerely believing, what he wanted to believe. Indeed, the secret of his success was largely owing to his moral earnestness. This was the power by which, more even than by his oratory or his intellect, he swayed the masses of his fellow-countrymen.

Nobody could come within reach of him without feeling that he was profoundly penetrated himself with the truth of everything he said.

In 1875, when he had temporarily resigned the leadership of the Liberal party to Lord Hartington, Mrs. Neville Lyttelton told me he was dining on Sunday with Mrs. Stuart-Wortley, in a state of spirits almost childish, for I suppose

he really thought at the moment that he had retired from active politics. He told her how he had attended service in the Chapel Royal, probably for the last time, as he connected it with Parliamentary life, and he felt inclined to say coming out of the door :

Good-bye, church ; good-bye, steeple ;
Good-bye, parson ; good-bye, people.

A lady who lived at East Sheen recollected about that time his going down to Lord Leven's and rolling down a grass bank, in the very abandonment of his joy.

Indeed, he always believed in his retirement. Long before that came he said to a neighbour at dinner : ' My great wish is to be out of all the strife. At my age I ought to be one of those "whose faces are set towards Zion, and who go up thither ;" this is only a preparatory school—only a preparatory school.'

M. des Jardins, at the annual meeting of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences in Paris, said :

' Mr. Gladstone might have sat here at his choice among our philosophers, our historians,

our jurists, our economists, or our moralists. He summed up in his person all the Moral Sciences; better still, he carried out the doctrines which he professed. Even while in office he knew how, if necessary, to set the right of mankind above British interests.'

To this I may add, without fear of contradiction, that he was a scholar, financier, theologian, administrator, and orator of the highest order; unrivalled as a Parliamentary tactician; while one of his chief claims to the admiration of posterity will be that he was able at will to excite the enthusiasm, rouse the sympathies, and call forth the love and the hatred, both alike passionate, of his fellow-countrymen.

That Mr. Gladstone's political life has been advantageous to our country I cannot doubt, but posterity alone can decide; of this, however, I am sure, that it will be 'counted to him for righteousness,' for it is the struggle and not the victory that constitutes the glory of noble hearts.

CHAPTER XIII

1872—1875

Chesterfield Street in 1872: Historical Associations—Watts's Studio: the Cosmopolitan Club—The Board of Inland Revenue: Herries and Stephenson—Visit to Paris: Traces of the Siege—Visit to Studley in January 1873—Dicky Doyle—Deaths of Bishop Wilberforce and Lord Westbury—Royal Commission on Judicial Establishments—First Visit to Hawarden—Mr. Gladstone and Tree-felling—Sir Frederick Abel's Experiment—Mr. Gladstone on the Extravagance of the Indian Council—His Defeat on the Irish Education Bill—The Election of 1874—Retrospect of the Government of 1868–1874—Fire at the Pan-technicon—Froude and Kingsley—Holidays at Datchet—Lord Granville on Landscape Gardening—Death of Lady Caroline Barrington—Residence at Wimbledon and Fairmile Common.

IN 1872 we took up our abode in Chesterfield Street, still charming, though not the Chesterfield Street of my earliest recollections, with Chesterfield House peopled by the Duke and Duchess of Abercorn and their beautiful daughters; the house, as Lord Chesterfield called it, of canonical pillars, which were brought from Canons, the seat of the Duke of

Buckingham, near Edgware, but now, in the miserable greed for money, shorn of its lovely garden and its ancestral rookery. At the corner was the house where the great Disraeli, Lord Beaconsfield, breathed his last, and where Becky Sharp was found on that unlucky night by poor Rawdon Crawley in the arms of Lord Steyne. There, too, is what I have always rightly or wrongly imagined to be Thackeray's Lady Whittlesea's Chapel, where Charles Honeyman preached in the morning, and coughed in the afternoon 'for the women like a consumptive parson.' At any rate, it has its historical reminiscences; for, if it is not the building, it is the spot on which the Chapel stood where the Duke of Hamilton married the beautiful Miss Gunning at midnight. The historical Misses Berry's house, No. 8, is still as it was in the days when their *salon* was famous, and their drawing-rooms crowded with the most brilliant society of London. Chesterfield Street itself was where Beau Brummell lived, the famous dandy of the Regent's time; and later on was the abode of another dandy, with none of the faults of his

predecessor, Alfred Montgomery, who, unlike Brummell, accumulated friends as he advanced in years, and whose death was bitterly regretted by them all.

There at the corner is Watts's old studio, one of the great walls of which is covered with a life-size fresco taken from a story of Boccaccio's ('The Spectre Huntsman'), where a nude young woman, as a punishment for having jilted her lover, is pursued by furies and wild dogs, he to whom she had behaved so badly in her life bringing a party of friends to see the fate of this poor hunted girl. The room is now the abode of the Cosmopolitan Club, and it was a standing joke of Stirling-Maxwell's to say to any inquirer into the subject of the picture, 'You have no doubt heard of Watts's hymns ; that is one of his *hers*.'

It is a remarkable Club, which originally, in 1851, met in Robert Morier's rooms in Bond Street. The original list of members contained the names of Robert Lowe, Layard, Harcourt, Watts, Ruskin, Venables, Brookfield, Spedding, Palgrave, H. Phillips, and Arthur Russell ; it meets only on Wednesdays and Sunday nights,

when painters and politicians, officials, soldiers, and literary men assemble for a talk and a friendly pipe.

Visions of departed evenings rise in my recollection—when I have seen Alfred Wigan delight us all with his impersonation of the strong man or the bounding brick of Babylon, and Julian Fane give us wonderful impersonations of Rachel in her famous *rôle* of Adrienne Lecouvreur. There I saw Motley, Millais, Monckton Milnes, whom Carlyle called ‘The Perpetual President of the Heaven and Hell Amalgamation Society,’ and heard Tom Taylor tell us how in his drive into London from Clapham he had been told by the omnibus driver, ‘It seems to me, sir, that society’s pretty well nigh at a end in Paris.’ ‘How so?’ said Taylor. ‘Well,’ he continued, ‘I was reading in the paper last night that they were making barricades of omnibuses, and I thinks to myself, when they do that society’s pretty well nigh at a end.’

It was on his return from this Club that Mr. Bonteen was murdered in Lansdowne Passage in Trollope’s novel of ‘Phineas Redux.’

Here I have seen Tom Hughes of Rugby

renown smoking his old pipe, and George Barrington his cigarette; Laurence Oliphant, just back from the Lake of Tiberias; Browning and Tennyson, between whom no spark of jealousy existed; Millais and Thackeray, who never took in the spirit of the place when he said, 'Here everybody is, or is supposed to be, a celebrity. Nobody ever says anything worth hearing, and everybody goes there at midnight with a white choker, to appear as if he had been dining with the aristocracy.'

These are to the present generation only ghosts—*simulacra*. On what shore tarry they now?

In August 1872 I took my seat at the Board of Inland Revenue, consisting then of Sir William Stephenson, chairman; Mr., afterwards Sir Charles Herries, deputy chairman (son of the former Chancellor of the Exchequer); Mr. Alfred Montgomery and Mr. Roberts, commissioners; but it was conceded that I might continue to assist Mr. Gladstone till the end of the session, or at any rate till my successor was appointed. It was ultimately decided that Frederick Cavendish should undertake the office.

Sir W. Stephenson at once told me that I held an office where it was possible to do very little or a great deal. He recommended the latter course, and I soon found that he and Herries provided me with every possible opportunity of learning my work. Two better men were never yoked together in the management of a great Department: Sir William Stephenson's calm judgment, cool temper, and good sense made him an admirable chairman; while Herries, a scholar, a lover of detail, and a beautiful writer, supplied all that the chairman lacked.

In October my wife and I went for a short holiday to Paris, where we were to meet Sir Reginald Welby, and to see what appeared to us to be the wrecked remains of that City of Pleasure. While there we drove to the Pont de Neuilly and back through the Bois, contemplating the ruins and desolation of the siege and the Commune. Nearly all the houses were destroyed, though new ones were rapidly rising from the ruins. All the fine trees in the Bois near Paris had been cut down.

We saw Desclée at the Gymnase, and

‘Rabagas,’ a skit on Gambetta, and Sardou’s ‘Patrie.’ Welby was a wonderful guide over the battlefields of the Marne. One day, after having breakfasted at the Pavillon Henri Quatre at St. Germain, we walked on the terrace where the German Emperor and his staff were standing when a shot, fired from Mont Valérien, struck the wall below their feet. We went to St. Cloud in a carriage, the driver being dressed in the old postillion fashion ; here the demolition was terrible ; we saw a wall, all that was standing of a house, and a birdcage pathetically hanging on it still. In one house over the door was an unexploded shell stuck fast in the plaster. In the Rue du Bac and the Palais Royal and the Hôtel de Ville were terrible evidences of what Paris had suffered. Another day we visited Versailles, breakfasting at the Hôtel des Réservoirs, and visiting the Palais where, in the Galerie des Glaces, the King of Prussia had been declared Emperor. Passing by the Préfecture, we saw Thiers coming out for his afternoon drive, the only occasion on which I had ever seen him. M. Thiers, by the way, once met an old college friend who said, ‘ Well,

what have you been doing since we parted?' 'J'ai été ministre,' said Thiers. 'Protestant?' replied his friend. Such is fame.

I had some revenue business to transact with the Governor of the Bank, the Vicomte de Pleurac, and much regretted the inadequacy of my French, but consoled myself with the thought that, bad though it might be, the Vicomte could not speak a word of English.

When I was Mr. Gladstone's secretary and living in Downing Street, my name was put on the list of those who had the privilege of driving down Constitution Hill. Soon after the Tory accession my wife was stopped by the Park-keeper and told that our name was removed from the list by the Home Secretary without any communication with us, which was a strong order. We mentioned this to Sir Thomas Bid-dulph, the Queen's Privy Purse, and shortly after had the pleasure of receiving a notification from the Home Secretary that he had received Her Majesty's orders to grant us the right during life.

In the end of January 1873 we joined a large party at Studley for the coming of age of

Lord de Grey. There was nothing approaching to architectural beauty in the house, but there was a fine ball-room ; and, as all the world knows, within a mile of it is the most glorious ruin in England—Fountains Abbey. Close to it is a beautiful old house, so beautiful that one marvels at the curious taste that could build in its vicinity a house like the one that glories in the name of Studley Royal.

The party was a great success, and the host and hostess, young, clever, and charming, did everything to make it so. Among the guests was ‘Dicky Doyle,’ the clever caricaturist, son of a clever caricaturist father, ‘H. B.’ By this time he had abandoned his manners and customs of ye Englishe, and his ‘Diary of Mr. Pips,’ and had already taken to sketches of fairyland, many of which were in Lady Ripon’s boudoir ; he was of a singularly simple character, full of dry and good-natured wit and companionship.

On June 18, as Gentleman Usher, I had to go down officially to Dover to assist in the reception of the Shah of Persia. There was a fog hanging over the Channel as we arrived, but it became less dense as the sun became more

powerful, and the ships of the Channel Squadron appeared, one by one, out of the mist, and saluted—a lovely sight. We returned by special train to Charing Cross with the Granvilles to their house in Carlton House Terrace, to see the procession pass. Unfortunately, a thunderstorm broke and soaked everybody and everything.

In the middle of July we had been spending our Sunday at Englemere, Bobsy Meade's place, near Ascot, and on getting our newspapers learnt the sad news of the Bishop of Winchester's death. He was riding over from Dorking to Holmbury with Lord Granville, when his horse put his foot in a rabbit-hole, and fell (killing him on the spot), in a lovely grass valley near Holmbury. It was a curious coincidence that, after he had started in the morning, he returned, asking for his glasses, 'for,' he said, 'I am going this afternoon to such a beautiful country.'

I had been much in contact with him when Mr. Gladstone's Secretary. I recollect on one occasion his telling me how dearly the public like a bit of nepotism, and illustrated it by saying that when he was at Oxford a good living in his

diocese fell vacant ; he wanted some new blood, but feared the outcry of the clergy in the diocese. At last he appointed his own son, and not a word was said.

We were spending a long holiday at Walmer in 1871, when he arrived and delighted us all with his stories.

One I remember was of Talleyrand, who was transacting business with the Emperor, when the latter suddenly turned to him, and said : ‘ I have lately been subject to fits, which I am anxious to conceal. I feel as if I were going to suffer from one now ; if it should be so, keep the fact from everyone.’

A minute later the Emperor fell back in his chair, becoming livid. At that moment Talleyrand was alarmed by a knock at the door, and an A.D.C. said he had brought a message from the Empress. Talleyrand said the Emperor was engaged at the moment, and could not be disturbed. The A.D.C. angrily retired, and Talleyrand went back to the Emperor, only to find him apparently dying. In great terror at his own position, he heard a loud knock at the door and found the Empress, annoyed at the

failure of her messenger, demanding admission. Talleyrand audaciously gave her the same answer he had given to her A.D.C., and giving himself up as lost, returned to find the Emperor's pulse beginning to beat. I am bound to say that one of the party, who was a bit of a cynic, went on whispering at each story, 'Absolutely untrue,' 'A complete fabrication,' and so on.

On the very day after the Bishop's death died Lord Westbury, who had been Lord Palmerston's Chancellor, a man of great ability, a clever lawyer, utterly unscrupulous, with as bitter a tongue and vitriolic a wit as ever cursed their possessor. He and the Bishop had many acrimonious disputes in the House of Lords, originating with Lord Westbury's applying the word 'saponaceous' to the Bishop, who was always afterwards called 'Soapy Sam.'

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Lowe, asked me to serve on a Royal Commission, appointed to inquire into the Administration Departments of the Courts of Law, an offer which I gladly accepted as giving me some work beyond my own department.

Lord Lisgar was our chairman; Baron

Bramwell, W. Law, George Trevelyan, and Mr. Rowsell were also on the Commission.

We worked hard and proposed many reforms which bore fruits in the High Courts of Judicature Bill. We recommended that a committee should be appointed to give effect to further reforms, and when the Tories came in they appointed it, leaving out Bramwell, Trevelyan, and myself!

Various causes, and the desire to get free from secretarial work when we did get a holiday, had postponed our first visit to Hawarden till 1873.

The place has been described so often that it is needless to go over ground so thoroughly known to everybody interested in it.

The life was very simple and somewhat old-fashioned—good plain food, regular and early hours; Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone going to church every morning at eight and returning to breakfast; then came a little talk, after which Mr. Gladstone went to work in his library, to which he kindly invited me, and showed me his correspondence; a plain luncheon followed, and then a good walk through a beautifully-

wooded park tossed about in various undulating glades. In those days he had no favourite dog, and so the talks were long, uninterrupted, and of course intensely interesting about men and all sorts of subjects ; but rarely was a walk finished without some allusion to the height or circumference of the bole of a tree, in which he took a personal interest. Then always five o'clock tea and more reading till dinner, when he held forth on all subjects ; but the one that delighted me most was when he got on to old recollections and memories of Lord Aberdeen, Sir Robert Peel, and even so far back as Eton days under Keate.

It was at a dinner held in this year, where Sir Henry Storks¹ and Lord Essex were present, that the conversation turned on tree-felling, on which Mr. Gladstone, of course, was a great

¹ Sir Henry Storks, who was a very distinguished soldier and Clerk to the Ordnance, committed the error of going into Parliament at the age of seventy-two.

One night George Glyn asked him to stay for a division, and in those days the House sat often till three or four o'clock in the morning.

'Yes,' he said, 'I will ; but, my dear George, there is never a morning when I shave myself before my looking-glass that I don't say : "Good-morning, you d——d old fool."'

authority. He had often told me that if other trades failed he would be able to gain full wages as a timber-cutter. Sir Henry Storks said he thought that for the future trees would be cut down by placing a ring of guncotton round them, and offered to take Mr. Gladstone down to Woolwich to show him some experiments. Time passed, and no vacant afternoon could be found for the expedition, which Mr. Gladstone regretted.

He was told that Sir Frederick Abel was prepared to show him the result of the guncotton necklace on a mast to be erected in the garden in Downing Street, which I went to witness.

Sir Frederick undertook that there would be no noise or disturbance of any kind. When I arrived at the gardens I found Ayrton, then First Commissioner of Works, who was not a believer in scientists, protesting against the experiment.

On Sir Frederick Abel's assurance, however, the experiment took place, and, after being nearly deafened by a terrific report, I found myself under a shower of broken glass, which fell from the skylight in the First Lord's house.

All the adjoining windows that were open were destroyed, and, contrary to the common belief, those that were shut escaped the almost universal smash, the noise of which was heard in Hyde Park.

There was only one person who rejoiced, and that was the triumphant Ayrton. Theories were exploded as well as guncotton.

On December 10 Mr. Gladstone wrote to me asking me for some remarks on the extravagance of the Indian Council, about which we had conversed at Hawarden :

Hawarden Castle, Chester : December 10, 1873.

‘ My dear West,—You gave me a kind of promise to supply me with materials for the purpose of showing that the India Office is less economical in administration (perhaps also in its composition) than our Government generally is, or than Treasury principles, so to call them, would require.

‘ I have at present only a strong, a very strong, suspicion but no particulars. If you could supply them I think it would be of great use in a not improbable contingency.

‘In my opinion it would be of great advantage that one place at the Council Table should be filled on the nomination of the Board of Treasury; and that the person so appointed should be invested with the title to record his reasons officially against any proposed expenditure where he considers it to be contrary to any rule established for Imperial administration.

‘Yours sincerely,

‘W. E. GLADSTONE.’

Mr. Lowe had wished me to be appointed as a councillor, and I wrote him a long letter in answer, which is too personal to publish here.

Mr. Gladstone was defeated on his Irish Education Bill by a curious combination of Tories, Roman Catholics, and discontented Liberals, and at once resigned; but the Conservatives were not ready, and cleverly contrived to keep Mr. Gladstone in office.

One Sunday I met Mr. Gladstone at the Chapel Royal, and had a talk with him about recent elections which had gone against the Government.

The next day he had a bad cold and was

kept in bed for a short time. Here it was that he hatched his plot of a dissolution. Coming home from a dance at Sir William Stephenson's, I found a note from Gurdon telling me what was to appear next morning—the dissolution and the proposed abolition of the income tax. Nothing could exceed the popularity of the movement at the moment, and I received quite an ovation at the *Cosmopolitan* a few days afterwards.

Then came the disastrous election of 1874—a wholesale defeat, horse and foot—and it became a matter of consideration whether or not the Government should meet Parliament or resign.

Mr. Gladstone wrote on the subject of his arrangements to me :

10 Downing Street, Whitehall : February 10, 1874.

‘My dear West,—Many thanks for your useful note.

‘(1) I see no reason why a vote of credit should not be given at any time after a new Ministry was constituted in its main offices, say March 20 or 22; the Easter holidays need not begin until April 1, 2, or even 3. This could be

done by the Secretary to the Treasury, perhaps even by the outgoing Government.

‘(2) I think it would be found that in 1852 and 1858 the Government, taking office in February, required a very short time to make up its mind about the Estimates, and I should not have thought it impossible that the Estimates could be laid, on the responsibility of the new Government, in Passion Week, but neither would it be necessary.

‘Yours ever,

‘W. E. G.’

I had accordingly the pleasure of going into the whole question of dates and possibilities and precedents since the Duke of Portland’s time in 1807, with that most charming authority on all Parliamentary knowledge, Sir Erskine May, Clerk to Parliament.

Coming home one February evening, I was met by my wife, who told me that as she was driving back by the Park, near Knightsbridge, there were great sparks from some huge fire falling around her ; so we instantly started forth in the direction of the blaze, which we could

now plainly see was somewhere in Belgravia. We reached Wilton Place, and were admitted into the house of Lady Georgiana Bathurst, from whose windows the fierce flames of the Pantechnicon were painfully glaring. The windows grew so hot that it was impossible to touch the glass with our hands. Lady Georgiana was crippled with rheumatism, and arrangements had to be made for her removal, in case the flames spread to her house, which happily they did not, and we, having some people dining with us in Chesterfield Street, were obliged to return; but after dinner Sir Reginald Welby and I returned to see the end of one of the biggest conflagrations of our day. The sky seemed ablaze, and the modern Calphurnia might have said: 'The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of Princes,' for within three days Mr. Gladstone's great Government of 1868-74 had ceased to exist.

Never was there a Government to compare with that of Mr. Gladstone's of 1868. The Irish grievance of a dominant Protestant Church of the minority was abolished. National Education was established. Purchase in the

Army was done away with. The Ballot Bill for the protection of voters was passed into law. The foolish Ecclesiastical Bill was repealed. The Alabama Arbitration opened up a vista of peace instead of war to the nations of the world. Neutrality was maintained throughout the terrible Franco-German war; while on his defeat Mr. Gladstone left a surplus of 5,000,000*l.* to his successor, after having reduced taxation and paid off 26,000,000*l.* of the National Debt.

In all this work Mr. Gladstone was the guiding and presiding genius, and it was not wonderful that he spent his majority.

Before this had come, however, I had ceased to be his Secretary and had become a Commissioner of Inland Revenue; but on his return to office he kindly allowed me to see all his correspondence, though, of course, I took no part in political work.

Notwithstanding the performances of the 1868-74 Government, Froude so far forgot the duties of the historian in the party man, that he deliberately stated that Mr. Gladstone's Government had nothing to show but revolu-

tionary measures in Ireland, which had hitherto been unattended by success: *Voilà comment on écrit l'histoire!*

The following lines, which were suggested by certain utterances of Froude and Kingsley, might fittingly be quoted here:

Froude informs the Scottish youth
That parsons never tell the truth;
At Cambridge Canon Kingsley cries
That history's a pack of lies.
Such statements how can we combine?
This perhaps explains the mystery,
Froude thinks Kingsley a divine,
And Kingsley looks to Froude for history.

In the summer we let our house in Chesterfield Street to Mr. Stanley, and took a house at Datchet till the late autumn, when we went to Hill House, and spent much of our time on the river; the C. Hambros, Monty Corry, Welby, and the Charles Stephensons and Lord Morley constantly making up the crew of a famous four oar of Welby's.

When we were staying at Walmer, Lord Granville was very anxious that our eldest son, Horace, should serve an apprenticeship to Mr. Thomas, the famous landscape gardener, arguing he was the only man at the head of the

most charming profession in the world, and that he had no one to fill his place, when he should grow older.

He wrote on the subject to Mr. Thomas, who answered: 'Once bitten twice shy. I have tried one gentleman and will never try another.' But Lord Granville would not abandon the idea, and afterwards wrote to me the following letter:

Walmer Castle, Deal: September 23, 1874.

'My dear West,—I have been thinking over my failure with Thomas, respecting your boy. I regret it, as Thomas himself told me that there was hardly any one in his profession, notwithstanding the passion all classes in this country have for improving or spoiling the parks and gardens which they inherit, buy, or erect.

'Thomas has the advantage of being a gentleman, not shy, and pleasant; but he is evidently not a clever man. If he took your son the advantage would rather be in the connection and the succession than in the learning.

'There are some great landscape gardeners in France—the man who made the new Bois de

Boulogne, and others who have been employed by the La Rochefoucaulds, etc.

‘In all probability they have more knowledge of the principles of their art than Thomas, and at least as much taste; they would probably be more accessible to a premium, particularly with an Englishman, who would not become a rival in France, and might introduce them to a connection in England. They would teach French for nothing.

‘If your boy has a turn for drawing and construction, after a year or two of study of French gardening and landscape gardening, an architect like Devey might make use of him for the outdoor part of his work, and he might push himself into the tolerably lucrative and very pleasant occupation of the English “Le Notre” of the generation.

‘It is not clear that Thomas might not be too glad to get hold of him at the end of that time.—Yours,

‘GRANVILLE.’

Later on the same dear friend asked Mr. Devey to give our youngest son a chance of entering the ‘delightful profession’ of an archi-

tect, which he did; and though Mr. Devey's early death sundered the friendship which was begun so auspiciously between them, the education our son had received from him remained, to which I am sure he will attribute a great part of his present success.

In the spring of 1875, Lady Caroline Barrington, my wife's mother, caught a chill, and died at Kensington Palace. Lady Caroline Barrington was the third daughter of Charles, Earl Grey. In 1827 she was married to Captain Hon. George Barrington, R.N., who was a Lord of the Admiralty in Lord Grey's Administration. He died in 1835, and Lady Caroline had lived with her father at Howick until she was appointed Lady of the Bedchamber to the Queen, and took up her residence at Windsor. She subsequently became Lady Superintendent on Lady Lyttelton's retirement from that post. Nothing could exceed the kindness of all the royalties, who were devoted to her. The Prince of Wales, the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Louis of Hesse, the Duke of Connaught, and Prince Christian attended her funeral at Kensal Green.

We let our house in Chesterfield Street and

took the new house at Wimbledon, which belonged to Dr. Sandwith, one of the heroes of Kars. Charles Barrington came and lived here with us till the autumn, when we moved further off and took a little place near Fairmile Common, Esher.

One evening we were standing on the road when we heard the shuffling steps of an old man passing by; as soon as he had done so he sank on the bank, and on our going to his assistance he said: 'I mostly 'as a fit going up 'ill.' I asked him where he was going, and he replied: 'Down there towards Cobham.' I, trying to cheer him, said: 'That's all right, as it is down-hill all the way.' 'Ah!' said he; 'that's the worst of it; I always pitches on my 'ead going down 'ill.' And yet he had in that hilly country been out for a long day's pleasuring!

Lady Rose, who of all the women I ever knew was the brightest and most witty, was much amused at this story, and told me that, asking a poor woman once how her husband was, the reply came: 'Oh, he is better to-day; and indeed, I have always remarked that if he gets through May, he generally lives through the rest of the year.'

CHAPTER XIV

1875—1879

Mr. Gladstone's Motive in Retiring from the Leadership—Lord Granville on the House of Lords—Visit to Tintagel—Dinner with the Archbishop of Canterbury—Hawker of Morwenstow—Sir George Trevelyan's 'Life of Macaulay'—Mr. Gladstone on Croker in the 'Quarterly'—Lord Lyttelton's Death—Mr. Gladstone's Speech at Blackheath on the Bulgarian Atrocities—His Literary Conversations—Mr. Gladstone's Hat—Verger the Phrenologist—Mr. Gladstone's use of Unparliamentary Language—His Letter to Mr. Herries—My Appointment as Deputy-Chairman of the Inland Revenue Board—Visit to Hawarden in 1878—Mr. Gladstone's Estimates of Forster and Lowe—Lord Lawrence and Lord Lytton—Anecdote of Sir Drummond Wolff—Mr. John Murray on Successful Authors—Stamp Reform: My Victory over Welby—Letter from Mr. Lingen—Marriage of the Duke of Connaught—Visit to Studley.

MR. GLADSTONE retired from the Leadership of the Opposition in the House of Commons, partly from a desire of rest, but mainly I think from his dislike of daily confronting Mr. Disraeli, a man so utterly opposed to him, not only in politics, but in thoughts, tastes, and desires. It was necessary to choose a leader, and it lay

between Mr. Forster and Lord Hartington; naturally the House of Commons preferred the Duke's son. Lord Granville told me very truly, that while the House of Lords daily sank in the estimation of the country, the love of the individual lord increased in proportion.

In February there was a question of my transfer from the Board of Inland Revenue to the Under-Secretaryship of the India Office, which Mr. Gladstone rather favoured; but it was settled otherwise.

In the autumn we paid a visit to Lady Hayter, who had inherited from Mr. Cook, the editor of the 'Saturday Review,' a cottage at Tintagel, which in those days was over twenty miles distant from a railway station. In this far-off county, the Bodmin and Wadebridge line was one of the first opened to the public by the London and South-Western Railway Company, in the room of whose chairman may be seen a picture of the train and its open carriages; in front of the engine and between the buffers sat a man whose business it was to get down and open the gates. It was a great charm to us jaded Londoners to get to this wild country.

On our way we passed through one of the pre-Reform close boroughs of Cornwall—Camelford—which had the honour of returning Lord Henry Petty, afterwards Lord Lansdowne, and Henry, afterwards Lord Brougham.

All our time was spent in expeditions to King Arthur's Castle, to Rough Tor, Brown Willy and Slaughter Bridge, near the scene of that great battle in the west, where rumour says King Arthur lies buried.

When staying here we got a message from the genial rector, saying that the Archbishop of Canterbury was coming to pass the night at his house, and asking the whole party to meet him at dinner, and to bring all our servants to wait.

We were a joyous party, and all day long we had a misgiving that we should indecorously laugh at the wrong moment. The hour and the dinner came, and all went smoothly until a fine dish of Cornish junket appeared in Mr. Kinsman's best china bowl; which, however, had been mended. Just as my servant was handing it, the piece broke away, and the whole junket poured over our host's best evening coat. 'God ——' he exclaimed; and then in a tone

subdued in deference to his guest, 'bless the Queen'—whereupon we all burst into uncontrolled laughter, and the rest of the evening was most merry.

During one of our visits we were tempted to pass a night at Bude, and to drive over the following day to a sale at Morwenstow, the house of the Rev. Robert Hawker, who had recently died. In early manhood he had married an old lady, who paid the expenses of his education at college; and in late life turned the tables by marrying a very young wife. He was eccentric in his dress, his manners, and his ways, and worked hard in rescuing victims of the savage wreckers of the Cornish coast. He was also a poet, and was the author of

And shall Trelawney die?
And shall Trelawney die?
Then thirty thousand Cornish boys
Will know the reason why.

The miners from the caverns re-echoed the song:

Then twenty thousand underground
Will know the reason why.

These lines were quoted by Macaulay in his 'History' as being an old Cornish ballad. On

discovering that this was a modern song of Mr. Hawker's, instead of a real song of Cornish miners, at the time of the trial of the seven bishops, Macaulay must have been as disappointed as I was on finding that the 'Wear-in' of the Green' was not a revolutionary ballad of 1798, but, in the form we know it, was evolved from the quick and poetical brain of Boucicault, for his play of the 'Colleen Bawn.'

In the beginning of the year 1876, George Trevelyan's delightful 'Biography of Lord Macaulay' appeared. In it there were some very severe remarks on John Wilson Croker, which were shown to his widow, who was our next-door neighbour; she was naturally unhappy, and to please her I wrote to Trevelyan, who was very kind, and promised to expunge the objectionable passages from his next edition, regretting their insertion. I also, at Mrs. Croker's request, saw Mr. Gladstone and got his authority to ask Mr. John Murray if he would insert an article in the 'Quarterly' on the biography, in which Mr. Gladstone said he would put Croker in a truer position.

In talking over Lord Macaulay's character

Mr. Gladstone remarked that he never had any idea of proportion and often would absolutely despise an opponent whom the world thought was nearly his equal ; and this was the case with Croker, who was, no doubt, a formidable antagonist. Mr. Gladstone wrote his article, which, while most complimentary to Trevelyan's ' Biography,' had the merit of making poor Mrs. Croker satisfied.

Going to him one morning I learnt that Lord Lyttelton, in a fit of depression, had destroyed himself. Mr. Gladstone, whose lifelong friend he had been, was deeply grieved ; he told me how he partly laid the blame at his own door, for he had met him a day or two before at dinner, and had made a suggestion to him to commence a Concordance of the Odyssey, as he was the only person who could do it satisfactorily. ' I did not,' he added, ' press it upon him as vigorously as I should have done, for, had I succeeded, the work would have interested him and occupied his attention and perhaps might have saved him from himself.'

It was in this year that Mr. Gladstone was the mouthpiece of the nation in denouncing the

massacres known as the Bulgarian atrocities, and I heard him address a meeting of 10,000 people at Blackheath, where I went with Lord Carrington and my son Horace, and shall never forget the effect of his magic voice and delivery. There was a knot of people bent on interruption, who, in little more than a few moments, were reduced into unwilling silence, and soon after into rapt attention and enthusiastic applause.

We were now living at Kensington Palace, and Mr. Gladstone, having no London house, came with Mrs. Gladstone to pay us a visit. We had in his honour many pleasant little political dinners, which reminded us of our dinners on Thursdays when we were in Downing Street, of which only the memory remains. But it is a bright memory of Mr. Gladstone as the central figure, ever brimming over with earnest talk, to which the whole dinner party listened with rapt attention.

Thus I remember how Mr. Gladstone, in comparing George Eliot and Walter Scott, remarked on the unsatisfactory nature of all the former's marriages.

‘But,’ said Mrs. Neville Lyttelton, ‘Scott’s are so colourless.’

‘Colourless,’ he said, ‘what do you say to Meg Merrilies, and Rebecca?’

‘Neither were married,’ said Mrs. Lyttelton. Mr. Gladstone did not answer, but went on to say :

‘How well I recollect, as a boy, lying on my stomach on the grass, reading Walter Scott’s novels as they came out in numbers!’

After one of his great speeches he asked Mrs. Lyttelton after Mrs. Clive, instead of her mother, Mrs. Stuart-Wortley, and, detecting his mistake, he groaned over what he called ‘the lamentable state of his memory.’

‘But,’ she said, ‘through all your long Liverpool speech, you never referred to a note.’

‘Ah,’ he said, ‘of course if I make an effort I can remember.’

Mr. Gladstone constantly told us that nearly every year he was obliged to have his hat enlarged. ‘I always stick to mine,’ he said, ‘as there are only two men whose hats I could ever get on my head—one the Duke of Newcastle’s, the other Lord Stanhope’s. The latter was a

very remarkable man, though not conspicuous in Parliament, and a staunch friend. We entered Parliamentary life together as followers of Sir Robert Peel; we afterwards diverged, but it never affected our friendship.'

Lord Stanhope was responsible for taking him to a man called Verger, who, he said, classified qualities according to certain bumps on the skull by placing one hand on the head, and his other on some conducting medium with corresponding circles, and thus defined the character. Mr. Gladstone rather believed in him, as he told him how many qualities he was deficient in, among others in the retention and memory of faces, which was true.

In June 1877 I met Mr. Gladstone at dinner at Mrs. Milbank's, and repeated to him what Lord Beaconsfield had told Sir William Stephenson on his recommending Mr. Herries as his successor: 'These appointments should be considered not as official promotions but as political prizes,' and, therefore, I considered our chances of succession small. 'D——n him,' said Mr. Gladstone; and this, after a long and close intercourse, was the first of only two occasions

on which I ever heard him make use of an unparliamentary expression.

On the second occasion he was talking of oratory in the House of Commons, and regretting that classical quotations were no longer appreciated. He instanced Pitt's quotation from Virgil in his speech on the slave trade, which he considered one of the most apposite he knew, and added: 'If a quotation were made in the House now, they would not care about it a d——n.'

The quotation, and the words preceding it which I have referred to, ran as follows:

'Then also will Europe, participating in her (Africa's) improvement and prosperity, receive an ample recompense for the tardy kindness (if kindness it can be called) of no longer hindering that continent from extricating herself out of the darkness, which in other more fortunate regions has been so much more speedily dispelled:

*Nos primus equis Oriens afflavit anhelis :
Illic sera rubens accendit lumina Vesper.'*

It was at the end of June that Lord Beaconsfield gave the chairmanship of the Board of

Inland Revenue to Herries, and this was the note he received from Mr. Gladstone on his appointment :

73 Harley Street : June 19, 1877.

‘ Dear Mr. Herries,—I hope I do not take an undue liberty in congratulating you on your arrival at the head of your great Department.

‘ My long-continued official relations with you enable me in some degree to bear willing testimony to the wisdom and justice of the selection which the Government have made.

‘ You follow a series of admirable chiefs, and I feel assured you will be able to maintain the high level of the tradition.

‘ In all my many transactions with the Board of Inland Revenue, I found continually increasing reason to admire the sound and enlightened spirit of the Department ; and I do not recollect so much as a single instance either of rashness or of slackness in the transaction of that mass of business which it was my duty and my pleasure to carry on by their aid.

‘ W. E. GLADSTONE.’

The appointment of Deputy was kept in

abeyance, though, of course, I discharged the duties of the place until the end of the session. On my asking Lord Beaconsfield's secretary whether there was any chance of the appointment being completed, he said: 'It is difficult to say when one of my chief's mottoes is: "Depend upon it delay is the secret of success."' "

On August 13, I heard from Lord Beaconsfield offering me the appointment of Deputy, and Walter Northcote, Sir Stafford's eldest son, was appointed in my place. Mr. Gladstone wrote to me the following letter:

Hawarden Castle, Chester: August 15, 1877.

'My dear West,—I send you on the part of all here a line of hearty congratulation, and I also congratulate the public on an appointment so conducive to its interests.

'I have always looked on the Board of Inland Revenue as nearly approaching—so to speak—the ideal, and I am sure it will not degenerate under present circumstances.

'Smith must be a loss to you; and it is uncertain till he is further proved what gain he

will be to the Admiralty. Stanley is clever, but can an heir to the earldom of Derby descend to the saving of candle-ends, which is very much the measure of a good Secretary to the Treasury?

‘Pray remember us if you come northwards, and believe me, most sincerely yours,

‘W. E. GLADSTONE.’

In the following November we paid a visit to Hawarden; and after dinner Mr. Gladstone discussed at great length the difficulties attending the formation of a new Liberal Government. It is always supposed that Mr. Gladstone did not understand men; but if he did not, he could nevertheless make very shrewd guesses as to their capabilities, erring, no doubt, too often on the lenient side. Mr. Lowe he considered a man fitted by nature for offence rather than defence, stronger in opposition than in office. He was always impressed with the ability and honesty of Mr. W. E. Forster; but he was well aware that with them was combined a strong ingredient of vanity and want of tact. I think it was Bishop Wilberforce who said that if any man prided himself more especially on one

quality, the chances were strongly in favour of his being deficient in it.

It was about this time that Lord Lawrence, with all his authority, had been denouncing Lord Lytton's unhappy policy in regard to Afghanistan, which led to such disastrous results.

Notwithstanding Lord Salisbury's positive assurances that no attempt had been made to force an envoy on the Ameer, that our relations with him had not since last year undergone any material change, and that his feelings were in no way embittered towards the British Government, Lord Lawrence endeavoured to raise the country against the policy of Lord Lytton, who said that the opinion of his private secretary was worth twenty Lawrences. With this object a Committee was being formed, and while I was at Hawarden a telegram arrived asking Mr. Gladstone to join it.

Personally he was inclined to accede to the proposal, and thus give a cue to the party; but he ended by consulting Lord Granville, though he thought him apt to take too many people into his confidence; so unlike, he said, to Peel, who only took a very few.

Lord Grey and Lord Halifax had written, the former vigorously, favouring an agitation for the summoning of Parliament; but Lord Granville, while approving of the object of the Committee, was opposed to Mr. Gladstone or himself being members of it.

After this the conversation reverted, as it so often did, to his early conceptions of Peel, who except on a few points was essentially Liberal, indeed far more so than Palmerston ever was.

He thought O'Connell, except perhaps Mirabeau, the greatest demagogue that ever lived, and in that way superior even to Bright.

We then turned to another favourite subject of his, and naturally of mine—the Inland Revenue Department. He laid down as an axiom that the Chairman of that Board should always, in forming his estimates, be guided in forecasting the revenue for the coming year by what, humanly speaking, he was sure of getting; and it was the duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to accept it. He never but once, in his nine years' experience as Chancellor of the

Exchequer, ventured to alter estimates given him by the Chairman of the Inland Revenue Board, and in that instance only differed from him as to how much revenue would be lost by altering the incidence of the income tax.

I often wonder at the closeness with which revenue estimates for a coming year are made. In the eleven years during which I was Chairman of the Inland Revenue Board—thanks to the efficient help of my advisers—the returns exceeded my estimates only by 500,000*l.* on an average.

Incidentally Drummond Wolff came under discussion, and I told Mr. Gladstone that, with one exception, I did not believe Wolff bore animosity to anyone. As an instance of his diplomatic talent, I told Mr. Gladstone that I was once sitting with Wolff in the portico of the Athenæum when a notorious bore appeared. Wolff was equal to the occasion and shook hands with him warmly, saying: ‘Good-bye, good-bye.’ The bore was so taken aback that he speedily retreated.

The next day arrived Lord Bath and Mr. Dodson at Hawarden; the former, whom I had

always known as a Tory, had come over on the Eastern question, and, like all converts, was more Liberal than the Liberals.

Mr. John Murray came in time for dinner, and there was interesting publishing talk. Mr. Murray told us that Sir Walter Scott was, in a money point of view, the greatest English author, but successful only after his death; and it was sad to think how little he and his family made out of his writings, though probably not less than 400,000*l.* had been realised from first to last.

Then came in order Charles Dickens, Tennyson, and Macaulay.

Shortly after I returned to London and Somerset House, I received a long letter from Mr. Gladstone on the subject of income tax statistics, which he said he was sure, 'from the high organisation of your Department,' I should be able to answer. He was careful to add:

'My object is purely non-political, at least not against the Government. I think I see my way towards estimating the relative effects of railways, etc., on one side, free trade on the other, in promoting wealth, which I think has never been done.'

It is always a new source of wonder to me to think of how inexhaustible Mr. Gladstone's energies were.

Lord Hampton, at an advanced age, had recently been appointed Chief Commissioner of the Board of Civil Service Commissioners. His appointment at the time was looked on as a job, and Mr. Gladstone, to whom a job was like a red rag to a bull, thought so also; Sir Ralph Lingens, then Secretary to the Treasury, had proved to me that Sir Stafford Northcote had acted on his advice, and with the best motives. I sent the papers and explanation to Mr. Gladstone, who, it appears, had also heard from Sir Stafford:

‘Many thanks,’ he says, ‘for the figures *re* Hampton. Northcote spontaneously supplied the particulars contained in the letter within, which I thought you might like to see. Here-upon I withdraw the word “job.”’

Up to January 1879 the penny postage stamp could only be used for postal and not the ordinary inland revenue purposes, such as receipts, etc. It seemed to me that numerous involuntary evasions of this duty took place,

simply because people in the transactions of ordinary business did not always have the revenue stamps by their side, and I made a proposal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that one stamp should be made to meet both postage and revenue purposes. The Secretary of the Treasury, now Lord Welby, in the interests of statistical accuracy opposed it. Mr. Gladstone sent for us and told us we were to enter the lists and tilt, and he would act as assessor. After some argument Mr. Gladstone awarded me the palm, and the change was ordered to take effect. Henry Northcote sent me the following decree on hearing of Welby's defeat :

‘ LIBERTÉ,

‘ FRATER- [stamps] NITÉ,

‘ EGALITÉ.

‘ De par la République une et indivisible.

‘ Les soussignés ont jugé convenable de publier le Décret suivant :

‘ Le citoyen Welby, représentant de l'ancienne faction aristocrate intitulée Whig, ayant été dénoncé comme suspect d'avoir parlé contre la

fusion fraternelle des timbres ci-joints, est condamné par ce présent aux peines suivantes.

‘ Les biens du citoyen Welby seront affectés aux besoins particuliers des membres du Comité du Salut Public soussignés, moyennant la somme de vingt-cinq shillings (monnaie anglaise) dans laquelle le citoyen Welby se trouve actuellement débiteur à la Déesse de la Raison par les mains du citoyen J. A. Kempe.

‘ En outre le citoyen Welby est sérieusement prévenu de se garder bien de faire aucune réclamation contre cet arrêt sous peine d’être condamné comme contumace et d’avoir la tête tranchée par le bourreau public, le citoyen F. B. Garnett, sur la Place Somerset House.

‘ Vive la République !

[stamp]

‘ Vu et approuvé,

‘ ROBESPIERRE.’

(Signé)

ROBESPIERRE.

HERRIES.

DANTON.

WEST.

MARAT.

MONTGOMERY.

COLLOT D’HERBOIS.

KEITH FALCONER.

ST.-JUST.

NORTHCOTE.

When Deputy-Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, I was deeply occupied with the administration, and to my no small delight I received the following letter from Mr. Lingen, who was the distinguished Secretary of the Treasury, and my pleasure was added to by Mr. Gladstone's approval :

Treasury : February 6, 1879.

‘Dear Mr. Algernon West,—Some figures which I occupied the greater part of last Sunday in getting out, bring out this most satisfactory result, that, excluding a temporary and not excessive addition to the non-effective change, you were able—(1) To improve the emolument of your outdoor service—a necessity long accumulated and postponed till the latest moment that the safety of the revenue admitted—to the extent of 80,000*l.* per annum nearly ;

‘(2) To make the same sort of change and for the same reasons in your Legacy and Succession Duties Office ;

‘(3) To reform and stamp with a professional character your Solicitors’ Office ;

‘(4) In all your Departments to provide for

the introduction of the Playfair scheme, by well-considered present arrangements.

‘All this for an addition of no more than 10,000*l.* a year to your vote. It gave me sincere pleasure to call the Chancellor of the Exchequer’s notice to these figures yesterday—who expressed his warm satisfaction with them—and to tell him that nineteen-twentieths of this good administrative work was personally due to yourself, supported by your Board.

‘Very truly yours,

‘R. W. W. LINGEN.’

Algernon West, Esq.

To this I returned the following reply:

Board of Inland Revenue: February 6, 1879.

‘My dear Mr. Lingen,—I must thank you very warmly and sincerely for your letter of to-day, which, I think, has given me more pleasure than any letter I have ever received on official matters, and I must also thank you for the generous and kind thought which made you write it.

‘I wish I could end here without repudiating, as I must in all fairness, the share you allot me in the reorganisation of our offices.

‘For my own part I can only take a small proportion, for without the approval and cordial co-operation of my Chairman, and the help we got from our secretaries and assistant-secretaries in the office, I could have done very little. You must let me consider your letter therefore as an approval of the work of our Board, and in that sense I will not be one atom the less grateful to you for it.

‘I am sure we should be ungrateful if we did not thank you for all the patient labour you have incurred in our behalf, and all the help we have always had from you.

‘Yours very truly,

‘ALGERNON WEST.’

R. W. W. Lingen, Esq., C.B.

I could not resist the pleasure of sending this correspondence to Mr. Gladstone, who said in answer :

Harley Street : March 24, 1879.

‘My dear West,—I need not say, and yet cannot help saying, that I have read these letters with much pleasure, but with no surprise.

‘Ever yours sincerely,

‘W. E. GLADSTONE.’

In May I took my daughter, Constance, to Windsor, where I was in waiting, to the Duke of Connaught's wedding. The Duke himself and his pretty bride, with a childish little pout as if she were going to cry, on the arm of her father, the Red Prince, in a very red uniform—all made a pretty picture.

Of all the sights I have ever seen, and they have been many, nothing ever smiles on me so much as a religious ceremonial in St. George's Chapel, with the music, the painted windows, and the antiquity of the heraldic banners, which for the moment, at any rate, make one think that the Knights of the Garter may be proud of their Order for other reasons than that ascribed to it by Lord Melbourne.

In the autumn we paid a visit to Studley, and were entranced with the beauty of Fountains Abbey. From there we went to Castle Howard—then occupied by Lord and Lady Lanerton—the magnificent palace, built by Vanbrugh, approached by a fine avenue of clumps of trees converging on an obelisk raised in honour of the great Duke of Marlborough, with splendid fountains and garden statuary; and inside,

the splendid picture of the three Marys—the largest place, next to Blenheim, which I had ever seen. We missed our connection at Thirsk and travelled with the inspecting engineer, whose coach only was attached to the engine, which to us was rather exciting.

CHAPTER XV

1880

Announcement of the Dissolution—Mr. Gladstone's Second Midlothian Campaign—Herbert Gladstone's Candidature for Middlesex—Letters from Mr. Gladstone—Adam's Prophecies of Victory—Mr. Bright's Tribute to Mr. Gladstone—Lord Beaconsfield's Comment on the Tory *Débâcle*—Mr. Gladstone sent for to Windsor—The New Beer Duty—Mr. Gladstone's Enthusiasm for Finance: his Wonderful Memory—Mr. Watney's Testimony—Appointment of my Son Horace as Private Secretary to Mr. W. E. Forster—His Experiences in Dublin—The Arrest of Mr. Parnell: Elaborate Precautions—Mr. Forster and his Revolver—His Dislike of Police Protection—Anecdote of Judge Barry—Narrow Escape of Mr. Forster at Westland Row in March 1882—Father Healy's Wit—An Indignant Archbishop.

ON March 8 the secret of the dissolution was publicly known. As a splendid instance of that inviolable honour which pervades the Civil Service of this country, I may tell the following anecdote:

On the day preceding the announcement, an official friend of mine, from his intercourse

with Sir Stafford Northcote, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, became aware of what was going to happen. On his way home from the Treasury, he met a great friend of his not blessed with an income which exceeded the bounds of avarice, who was a candidate for an English borough, and who told him he was going abroad that evening, and yet my friend felt so bound by honour not to divulge a secret which had come to him through official sources, that he let the other start with the full knowledge that on arrival at his destination he would receive the news that would necessitate his immediate return. Some there were who said his conduct was Quixotic ; others, who revered the sacred traditions of the Civil Service, knew that he was right.

In March 1880 Mr. Gladstone threw himself with unabated energy into his second Midlothian campaign. The enthusiasm he created was unflagging, and it was a sore moment for me, tied by official restraints, to have to refuse an invitation from Lady Rosebery to join the party at Dalmeny.

In the midst of the campaign Herbert

Gladstone was asked to stand for Middlesex. It was a splendid opening, of which he availed himself. My two sons, Horace and Reginald, attended his meetings and helped him. Mr. Lowe, whom I met during the contest, assured me that Herbert spoke as well or even better on the platform than his father had spoken at his age.

I wrote to Mr. Gladstone saying how anxious I was that Herbert should not let slip such an opportunity, and he answered me from Dalmeny, saying :

‘A quiet, sober-minded man like me is necessarily bewildered at your audacious proceedings. Tell Herbert, if you see him, he is constantly in my mind; and I am so delighted, though not surprised, to hear that he has done well in speaking. Tell him to take opportunities of expressing loyalty to Granville and Hartington. Enthusiasm here is at fever heat, and the meetings, especially the *great* meetings, are better than in November.’

Herbert was evidently much in his thoughts, for at the *end* of the week he wrote :

Dalmeny Park, Edinburgh : March 27, 1880.

‘My dear West,—I have in my mind the possibility that the *London* elections may go ill, and this may be used to discourage Herbert.

‘In such case it may be well to provide him with the means of showing by facts that London does not always represent the country.

‘Without referring to other occasions, the election of 1841 would, I think, prove this. My recollection is that the Conservatives were then successful in the City, but were in a very small minority of the Metropolitan representatives, while they were in a *majority of eighty* odd from the entire country. This would not be difficult to ascertain by reference; will you, if you can, kindly do it, and send him the result. I have not named the matter to him.

‘Experience has shown that you judged well and wisely in encouraging him to stand. Had I been on the ground, my heart might have failed me, but I would not have stood in his way. The accounts of him give me intense joy, but no surprise. *I think* his face is worth a thousand votes.

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‘My election here is considered a moral certainty. The enthusiasm is ungovernable; it has done us mischief in causing the Sheriff to postpone the election; he was sincerely afraid of violence had he fixed Saturday—a great bore.

‘On Monday I expect to decide finally my public movements.

‘A thousand thanks for all kindnesses, your sons’ included.

‘Yours ever,

‘W. E. GLADSTONE.’

A few days later I received the following :

Dalmeny Park, Edinburgh: April 1, 1880.

‘My dear West,—Our enthusiasm keeps at boiling point, and our computations are all to the good. For Midlothian the only doubt in my mind (but I am sensible of the difference between objective and subjective certainty) is between a middling and a really good majority.

‘However, England seems less dependent than I had supposed on Scotch teaching.

‘Yesterday well bore out your anticipations. We are only getting the first telegrams of to-day as I write. It will surprise me now if the

Government survive, and it is much to be wished that if they fall they may fall heavily. As conversely I was tempted to hope that if beaten we should be decisively beaten.

‘Wretched City! If anything, it should be financial. What a tale *I* could tell of it as a financial authority!

‘My last Midlothian speech stands for tomorrow. Continue to give Herbert a kindly glance.

‘I look upon yesterday as a *dies alba*, and as an historic day.

‘What are your present expectations? You will not, I fear, have this until Friday morning.

‘Many thanks for all your trouble, and for the abstract.

‘Yours sincerely,

‘W. E. GLADSTONE.’

Willie Adam had succeeded George Glyn (who had become Lord Wolverton) as Liberal Whip. Never was there such a prophet of the victory which was coming in 1880. He never varied in what I thought his exaggerated views of the coming triumph, to which he largely

contributed by his aptitude for organisation and by his great popularity.

When the elections began we used often to dine together at Brooks's, and telegram after telegram used to pour in, giving news of fresh gains.

'If you want a seat,' he said, 'you have only to go to Scotland, say you were Mr. Gladstone's secretary, and you would walk in!'

But amidst all the Liberal successes came the sad news of my brother's defeat at Ipswich.

I had ventured to make a forecast of the elections, which I sent to Mr. Gladstone. On April 11 he wrote from Hawarden, where he had returned after his Midlothian campaign, saying :

'My dear West,—What wonders ! Even your cheerful calculations left far in the rear.

'Yours ever,

'W. G.'

Then came the rush of the election, triumph after triumph, victory over victory, throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Goschen repeated a story at Ripon which I had told him.

I was dining at Lady Ripon's, and was told by John Bright that he had met a lady recently who had loudly abused Mr. Gladstone to him. Mr. Bright said: 'Madam, have you any children? If so, show Mr. Gladstone to them, and if you can get him to shake hands with them, they will in after days thank you for having shown them the greatest, the noblest, and the purest of British statesmen.'

In a letter in which he acknowledged the loan, Mr. Goschen said, 'I thought it a good story for a large audience, and dragged it in by the heels.'

Miss Agnes Hope told me that she was staying at Hatfield during the Tory *débâcle* of 1880, and heard Lord Beaconsfield say to some of the young men: 'Ah, this is only an episode in your life; it is the end of mine.'

While the elections were proceeding, Welby gave us a dinner at the Garrick Club to celebrate the engagement of our friend Bobsy Meade to Miss Grenfell.

Dining one night shortly after the election was over with Mr. Gladstone in Harley Street, and before anything was known as to the

resignation of the Tory Government, I suggested that when he came in as Chancellor of the Exchequer he should repeal the malt tax and impose a beer duty.

‘Can it be done?’ he said.

‘Of course it can,’ I replied; ‘it is in operation in the United States now; we could inquire how it is done there.’

Mr. Gladstone was doubtful as to whether he should be in office at all.

Soon after this Lord Beaconsfield resigned, and first Lord Granville and then Lord Hartington were sent for to Windsor. The former realised at once that the only man the country wanted was Mr. Gladstone; the latter, after a vain attempt to form a Cabinet, declined the task.

On one of these evenings I was coming home from dinner and overtook Lord Granville, and walked with him, discussing what was going on, until we got near his house in Carlton Terrace. Just as we got there a hansom drove up furiously to the door, and two men said they must see Lord Granville. The servant said it was impossible. They said they would not go

away till they had got some news, and there they stood. I left Lord Granville and went for a policeman, whom I could not find, but meeting Wolverton, we returned, to find the men still there, who were only got rid of with difficulty. They were touts for the Press, and had been hanging about all day.

The next morning Mr. Gladstone was sent for to Windsor, and accepted the combined offices of First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. The following morning I was sent for to Harley Street, where I found him at work.

‘Send your inspectors at once to the United States,’ he said, ‘about the beer duty.’

‘I now think we can do it without that,’ I said, and we did it, thanks to Mr. Gladstone’s wonderful powers of perception and persuasion and to Mr. Young’s (who was then Secretary to the Board of Inland Revenue) knowledge and power of imparting details.

Mr. Herries, the Chairman of my Board, was ill during all the preliminary investigations into the possibilities of the conversion of the malt tax into a beer duty, and consequently I

had the great advantage of dealing direct with Mr. Gladstone, and learning myself his wonderful mastery of detail, his clearness and his accuracy. Luckily for me I had as a coadjutor Adam Young, a splendid type of the foremost of civil servants, who was able to give Mr. Gladstone all the minute details of the malt duty which he had asked for, from the time the barley was growing in the fields to the moment when it was finished beer.

Visiting Whitbread's great brewery one day with Mr. Young, I was wondering how successful the new beer duty would prove, when he answered good-naturedly: 'Our business is to inspect the brewery; do not let us waste time in thinking of what is going to happen in the future,' a habit and control of mind which must have contributed largely, I think, to his success.

One Sunday Mr. Gladstone met my daughter coming out of the Chapel Royal, and asked for me; hearing I was away, he said he must trust her with a great secret about the malt duty, and gave her papers which she refused to speak of even to my wife, and, I believe, sat on till my return.

Mr. Gladstone himself revelled in financial discussions, in which he was so splendid a master and I so inapt a pupil. When one day we arrived to keep an appointment with him, we found him engaged on some question of foreign affairs with, if I recollect rightly, a colleague and an ambassador, whom he got rid of, glancing at the clock and saying as he rose : ' Now I must go to those dear malt people.'

Mr. Gladstone's memory was simply marvellous ; he one day began the conversation by assuming that under the malt tax the profit of the maltster was 3 per cent. on the quarter of malt. I interrupted him by saying it was 4 per cent. ' Surely,' he said, ' you told me it was 3 per cent, or how could I have got it into my head.' I was sure of my ground, so with some firmness I maintained my position. Turning to Mr. Young, Mr. Gladstone said : ' Can you recollect as far back as 1832 ? ' ' Yes,' said he, ' and the profit was then reckoned at 3 per cent. per quarter.' ' Ah,' said Mr. Gladstone, much relieved, ' I now see how I got that figure into my head ; I was elected member for Newark in that year, and I studied the Malt Question then.'

Fifty years ago—what a memory!

After his great Budget speech, introducing the abolition of the malt tax and the substitution of the beer duty, he left the details of the Bill to be drafted by Mr., now Sir William, Melvill, the solicitor to our Board, and the details to Mr. Adam Young and myself. The care that was given to it, and a few meetings at Downing Street with Mr. Gladstone, settled all difficulties, and the Government won an easy victory in the House on a division raised by the brewers as to the specific gravity, though Sir Stafford Northcote, who knew nothing of the technical question, supported them.

Mr. Watney, the great brewer, who had worked the business himself as an operator, and was thoroughly acquainted with all its technicalities and details, was chosen to fight the various clauses and to insert amendments when the Bill was in Committee.

When Mr. Gladstone had answered and defeated a few of those which stood on the paper, Mr. Watney rose from his place, put his hat on, and came to me under the gallery, saying: 'It is no use my going on; Gladstone knows

more of my business than I do myself; he's a wizard and I shall leave the House,' which he proceeded to do.

During the progress of the Budget a mistake was made from the fault of a change not having been made in the original estimate. I was very miserable about it, and after breakfasting with Mr. Gladstone I said how sorry I was. He at once said: 'I don't put any of the blame on you, but even if I did I should not forget the part you took in originating the change of duty.'

Mr. Gladstone often told me it was the greatest financial revolution he had ever witnessed, and frequently testified to the ability of my Department in bringing it to so successful a conclusion. Sam Whitbread, who, of course, was deeply interested in it and knew the difficulties of the change, often told me he marvelled how it had been possible.

One day I was at Lord Ripon's house, and Forster, who was with him, asked me to speak to him; to my surprise he asked me if my eldest son Horace would become his assistant private secretary. I replied that all I could say of him was that, though he was very young and had

had no experience, he was a gentleman and would do his best, and that I should be glad if on this understanding he would take him.

He had already been offered a similar place by Lord Northbrook, but that was out of friendship for me, and this, I thought, would be better for him. At first he was put to work far too difficult for anyone without any experience and he made some natural blunders, but it was not till he had gone to Ireland with Forster that his real value came out. On Forster's return, he told me that no words could express the comfort he had been to him, or his charm and popularity, which indeed, I heard on all sides. He continued with him through all the terrible dangers and troubles of the time, till the Chief Secretary's resignation.

Forster was a Radical of the Radicals, with a strong infusion of Socialism, which he showed in dealing with the men in his employ. Outwardly rough, as if hewn from a rock, he had a vein of tenderness deep down in his heart.

He entered upon his Irish office full of hope of what he was to do in reconciling the

Irish, and gaining their hearts ; why he failed, it is too early to determine.

The following is from my son's recollections of his time in Ireland with him :

‘ Mr. Forster was appointed Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland 1880, and made me his private secretary in April of that year.

‘ The Land League had obtained such a hold throughout Ireland that he decided strong measures were absolutely necessary, unless the Irish Executive were to allow the leaders of the Land League to govern the country, and in consequence arrests were made throughout Ireland. Some of the most important of these were Davitt and Healy. Matters were in a very critical state, and it was a fight between the Land League and the Irish Government as to which was to have the upper hand. Special resident magistrates were appointed, and troops were drafted into all the disturbed districts. In spite of all these measures matters became worse, and in October 1881 Mr. Forster considered it necessary that Parnell should be arrested. This was kept most secret ; a special

meeting of the Cabinet was summoned, and Mr. Forster went over to London by the night mail to attend the meeting the next morning, leaving a few officials who were in the secret to make all the preparations necessary for the arrest, should he obtain the sanction of the Cabinet. Parnell was to address a meeting in Wicklow the same day, and was to stay in Dublin that night. The telegram came from Mr. Forster after the meeting of the Cabinet, telling us to have everything ready, and I remember dining that night at the Club, and sitting with Colonel Talbot, the head of the Dublin Metropolitan Police, after dinner, when he got the report that Parnell had returned from his meeting and was at his hotel. Mr. Forster was on his way back to Dublin, and everything was arranged that, on his arrival the following morning, he should drive at once to the Castle, sign the warrants, and then go on to the Chief Secretary's Lodge. Mr. Forster arrived at Westland Row at eight o'clock, and was out at the Chief Secretary's Lodge at nine o'clock, having signed the warrants on his way, and at 9.30 we received a message saying Parnell was lodged in Kilmainham.

We drove into the Castle at 10.30 and got in before anyone heard of the arrest, which did not become generally known until about twelve o'clock. Sir Thomas Steele, fearing serious riots, drafted artillery, cavalry, and infantry into the Castle yard, and no outsider was admitted. About seven o'clock we drove back to the Chief Secretary's Lodge with an escort. The police were doubled all round the house, and six troopers of the Scots Greys were put into the stables in case of emergency, and during this state of affairs I remember at about ten o'clock one night a Constabulary orderly came out with a telegram from Clifford Lloyd, stating that serious riots were taking place in the west, and about half an hour later a Dragoon orderly arrived with a telegram from the Queen. We could not decipher it, as the Foreign Office cipher was always kept in the Private Secretary's room at the Castle. Mr. Forster was dead tired, and I told him that I would go into Dublin and decipher it, and if there was anything to be done I would call him when I returned. I changed my things and started to ride into Dublin. When half-way through the

Phoenix Park I began to overtake the Dragoon orderly, who, in very forcible language, asked me who I was and my business, at the same time warning me not to come too near him. I gave an explanation which satisfied him, and on coming up with him I asked the reason for his apparent alarm, when he told me that riots were going on in Dublin, and he had had to get out of the town by a roundabout way, so as to avoid the mob, and advised me to look out for myself. I went on cautiously, trusting that if I saw any cause for alarm I could turn round, having no uniform which would attract attention. I reached the Castle gates without meeting a soul, but had to yell pretty loudly before I was admitted. Once inside, I inquired of the Constabulary officer what had taken place, and was horrified to hear that the unfortunate Constabulary orderly who had carried Clifford Lloyd's telegram, had been stoned by the mob and was only dragged through the gates partly alive. It appeared that when he had been sent out everything was quiet—the riots did not commence until half an hour afterwards; consequently on his way back he knew nothing, not

having met the Dragoon orderly with the Queen's telegram, who, as I have already said, had come by a different route. I fortunately had come behind the rioters, as they had gone on in front of me, and turned down Sackville Street.

‘All through this time it was well known that Mr. Forster's life was in serious danger, and of course threatening letters were not wanting, some of them genuine, the majority rubbish. It is a matter of history how marvellous were his escapes from that dangerous gang, who afterwards murdered poor Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke.

‘As I had the privilege of living with Mr. Forster at the Chief Secretary's Lodge, I considered it my duty to accompany him always when going into the Castle or returning home at night; and in Dublin, if ever he went round to the Club for a rubber of whist before going back to dinner, either I or my colleague, Mr. Jephson, would go with him. Acting under the advice of the police, we always carried loaded revolvers, and well do I remember an amusing incident arising out of this. On Mr. Forster's return from the Cabinet meeting to

which I have already alluded, he said to me in his study the following morning: "I bought a revolver yesterday in London, but it seems to me to be very awkward to get at." He then struggled with his inside breast-pocket and dragged out a cavalry "bull-dog" loaded in every chamber, with the muzzle pointing upwards. I persuaded him to let me take it and put it away, and I gave him in exchange the ordinary-sized "bull-dog;" and with that he and I used occasionally to go out into the kitchen garden, put up a target, and have a shooting match by way of getting our eyes in.

'All this time a special detective followed him about, and I did not envy him the long hours he had to sit on his wooden chair outside the door of Mr. Forster's room at the Castle. We also had two mounted police who would always follow the carriage in going and returning from the Castle; and I remember one evening, driving home in the dark, how Mr. Forster, who was more than usually bothered and worried over the Irish troubles, turned round to me and said: "Are those fellows following me?" On hearing they were, he said: "Tell

them to go home; I don't mind if they do kill me."

'But I was able to dissuade him from this course by pointing out that he would be putting the policemen in a wrong position, as, if anything happened to him and they had turned back, they would be blamed; so afterwards he put up with them, although it was naturally irksome to him.

'A sensational incident, which began in a silly practical joke, of which I now feel rather ashamed, took place on Christmas night. After we had gone to the smoking-room, instead of sitting quietly and chatting as might be expected, somehow we began "bally-ragging" (Mr. Forster had gone to bed), and from that I ran out of the front door into the garden, chased by the rest; but a watchful policeman, hidden behind a tree, and unaccustomed to scenes of frivolity, rushed out and captured me, much to the amusement of those following. The policeman, seeing the position of affairs, apologised and retired. However, the spirit of the fun had fled, and everyone was returning to the house, when I complained bitterly to the

policeman who was usually at the Lodge of the excess of zeal shown by his colleague. He sympathised with me, and, entering into the spirit of the thing, said: "He's new to the business; it's his first time out here." Then suggested: "Look here, sir, you see him now in the moonlight, walking up and down by the haha. Well, put on my hat and coat, and see if you can pass him. I dar'n't give you the pass-word, but when he challenges you, say you're the Inspector, and I'll see no harm comes to you." I slipped on the coat and hat, and off I started by a roundabout way so as to approach the policeman on the path by the haha; the remainder of the party, with the friendly policeman, crept along under the cover of the bushes to within as near their object as was safe, where they waited listening to the policeman pacing up and down on the gravel path; before long other steps were heard approaching, and then the challenge of "Who goes there?" rang out, and was immediately answered, "The Inspector;" and to the onlookers' astonishment they saw the policeman stand aside and salute, while "the Inspector" continued to march on.

At a corner of the garden under the shadow of the trees the parties all met, and the originator, fired with the success of the venture, said : " Go on, sir, and you'll meet the patrol."

'I, flushed with success, continued to march on through a bit of a coppice, when I again suddenly received a challenge from behind the trees, and immediately answered, as before : " The Inspector." But this time the words were hardly out of my mouth when I was roughly seized by the collar of my borrowed coat, and a bare sword placed across the back of my neck, and the point of another policeman's sword at my throat, with the question : " Who the —— are you ? "

'The friendly policeman hereupon thought things were getting a little serious, and, hoping to save bloodshed, rushed out from his hiding, exclaiming : " It is Mr. West, of the Lodge ; for God's sake do him no harm."

'The two police officers could not make it out, and one retained his hold on me, with his sword pressing my neck, while the other arrested the policeman without his hat and coat ; then came explanations, etc., and we were both

released, but the two constables who had arrested me said :

“ You may thank your stars, sir, there was a moon, or we should have cut you down first and asked questions afterwards, as the moment you said you were the Inspector, in reply to our challenge, we knew it could not be as it was not his footstep we had heard, and seeing you in a policeman's uniform we thought something must be up.”

‘ About this time, I think it was, Judge Barry came over to dine, and I can see him now, standing with his back to the fire before dinner in the drawing-room, and Mr. Forster, who was late back from the Castle, coming in saying :

“ Well, and how's that God-forsaken County Galway of yours going on ? ”

‘ He replied with a twinkle in his eye, and his strong Irish brogue :

“ Not God-forsaken, Mr. Forster, but Government-forsaken county.”

‘ One other event showing the great risk Mr. Forster ran of having his life taken came under my personal notice.

‘ It was in March 1882 when Mr. and Mrs.

Forster were to return to London for the Parliamentary session. Mr. Forster, as usual, had gone into the Castle in the morning, and was to join Mrs. Forster and his daughters at Westland Row Station in the evening, and travel by the night mail. When we arrived at the Castle, Jephson, who lived at Bray, asked Mr. Forster to go down with him by an earlier train and dine with him at the Yacht Club; but Mr. Forster said he did not think he should have time.

‘The day wore on, and as usual we were very busy, when about half-past five Mr. Forster’s bell rang and Jephson went in to him, and, coming back to our room, said :

“The Chief is coming down with me to dine at the Yacht Club before going on board the boat,” and left me one or two things to do that he might catch the train with Mr. Forster, who asked me to meet Mrs. Forster at Westland Row, and tell her he would meet her on board.

‘I dined at the Club in Dublin and met Mrs. Forster at the station, where I took the tickets, and at the time I noticed there was a very large

crowd : indeed, it was with difficulty I managed to get to the booking office, and on going on the platform it was with still more difficulty I helped Mrs. Forster to the carriage reserved for the Chief Secretary ; and when we were in, there was a continuous crowd with many inquiries as to “ Where was the Chief Secretary ? ”

‘ At the time I put this down to mere curiosity, but afterwards, at the trial of the “ Invincibles,” it came out that they were there with the intention of murdering him ; and they got a large crowd to attend to facilitate their escape after the foul deed should have been done.

‘ During the time I was in Dublin I came across many interesting people, amongst them Father Healy, so well known for his witty sayings and amusing stories. One of them I remember about a very tall young lady, called Miss Lynch :

‘ “ Nature,” said he, “ gave her an *inch* and she took an *ell*.”

‘ On one occasion, when walking with a friend from Dublin to Bray, his friend called his attention to some small girls bathing in the sea, with the remark :

“What wretched spindle-shanks they have for legs!”

Father Healy answered, “Sure and you wouldn’t expect such heifers to have calves!”

‘One story, though against myself, may be worth telling: When first I went to Mr. Forster I used generally to be given the less important correspondence to attend to, and I remember noticing one morning, on arriving at the Irish Office, the uninteresting looking letters which were on my table. I opened one, written in a bad handwriting, covering two sheets of foolscap, giving the writer’s views on the Irish Question, and suggesting many remedies. The letter began: “Dear Sir,” and ended up, “Yours faithfully, J. Ebor,” and somewhere in the corner was the word “York.”

‘After reading the letter, I did not think it was worth troubling Mr. Forster with, so acknowledged it in the usual way, and stated that the matter would receive attention. I addressed the reply to “J. Ebor, Esq., York,” thinking at the time that the address was scanty, and that probably it would come back to me through the Dead Letter Office. I should not

have thought anything more of the matter, but two days later I received an indignant letter from "J. Ebor," informing me that he was the Archbishop of York, and he thought it gross ignorance for anyone in the position of a private secretary not to know the usual signature of the Archbishop of York. I wrote a long letter full of apologies, which I only hope pacified his Grace's indignation.'

CHAPTER XVI

1880—1881

Correspondence with the Ripons—Letter from Lord Sherbrooke—Mr. Gladstone on the Beer Duty Bill and the Board of Inland Revenue—All-night Sitting in the House—Companionship of the Bath: Mr. Gladstone's Letter—Trip to the Riviera with Sir John Rose—A Parisian Dinner—Nice and Monte Carlo—Sir John Rose's *Britannic* Mood—Ill-health and Resignation of Herries—Appointed Chairman of Inland Revenue Board—Letter from Sir Ralph Lingen—Retirement of Alfred Montgomery—His Career and Personal Charm and Wit—'Not one of the Public'—Rebuke to a Private Secretary—Trip to Corsica in the '*Pandora*'—Visit to the Pietri Family—Ajaccio—Expeditions in Sardinia—Return to Walmer.

IN May I went to Charing Cross to see Ripon off as Governor-General of India, and met him and Northbrook on the platform; the latter said, alluding to me: 'He was my best correspondent when I was in India.' So Ripon begged me to write to him as I did to Northbrook. I did so till later in the year, when Lady Ripon joined him in India; I then transferred my

correspondence to her, and we kept it up regularly nearly every week during her absence.

When I first had joined the Board of Inland Revenue, I studied Sir Stafford Northcote's 'Twenty Years of Financial Progress,' and set myself, by way of an educational process, to write twenty years more. I sent what I had said of Mr. Lowe's chancellorship to him, and received from him the following letter:—

July 11, 1880: 34 Lowndes Square, S.W.

'My dear West,—I have, as you may well believe, read your paper with the greatest pleasure. I have no criticisms to offer, but am very much obliged to you for all the trouble which you have taken to put my proceedings fairly before the public. The only other person who has ever, as far as I know, said a good word for me was Mr. Noble. I was, if I must confess the truth, so much disgusted at having the crowning result of all my labours taken from me, as if my work had been a complete failure, that I have purposely avoided finance as a subject on which I might speak unadvisedly with my lips, and am consequently quite unable to offer

any advice or suggestion. Your account coincides exactly with my own impressions.

‘ With many thanks for the pleasure you have given and, I may add, the justice you have done me, believe me,

‘ Very truly yours

‘ SHERBROOKE.’

Encouraging as this was, I never had the audacity to publish what I had written.

The Beer Duty Bill was passed without much further discussion, and in August Mr. Gladstone wrote to Herries and myself :

August 6, 1880.

‘ Dear Mr. Herries,—I avail myself of one of the earliest moments of returning capacity for business to write to you.

‘ Let me first thank you for the great ability and no less conspicuous patience with which you have assisted me in the rather arduous matter of our Inland Revenue Regulations.

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‘ Will you also perform for me the very pleasing duty of conveying my thanks to those who have assisted you and me from the day when we first opened the subject until now.

‘I can only say that I have been always accustomed to look back on the business transacted with the Inland Revenue Department in former years as coming nearest among all my experience to what I should consider a model on their side of good public service, and that that experience of former years has been completely revived in the transactions of the last three months.

‘W. E. GLADSTONE.’

10 Downing Street, Whitehall : August 6, 1880.

‘My dear West,—I have written a note to Mr. Herries in the terms of which you are officially included ; but when I am a little better and more free, I must either orally or by letter give you a separate word on the subject of good service done in connection with the malt and beer duty.

‘Believe me, ever sincerely yours,

‘W. E. GLADSTONE.’

‘I must tell you the pleasure it has been to me that you should have had so large a share in the initiation and execution of this great change, certainly the largest that has ever been undertaken by your Department, except the putting

on the income tax, and I am not sure that it is not greater than that.

‘The value of your initiation and first working of it was very great.

‘W. E. G.’

Of the success of that measure it is impossible to speak too highly. There has never arisen a proposal for a change in the Act, which speaks volumes for the ability of the draftsman, Mr. Melvill.

There is great simplicity in its working, and the tax, being on the finished article instead of the raw material, has been a vast improvement.

The financial effect (for those interested in figures) has been as follows :

Duties equivalent to the present	
beer duty, viz. :—Malt and	
sugar used in brewing and	
brewers' tax : Average for	
five years to September 1879	£8,730,000
In the last financial year the	
beer duty (which was in-	
creased by 6 <i>d.</i> a barrel in 1895)	
produced	£11,826,129

In this month there was an all-night sitting in the House of Commons, from four o'clock one day till one o'clock the next day. On one or two occasions I went down to see the House still sitting, as a curiosity. I was present in the House when all the Irish members were named and expelled—a melancholy sight, which I shall never forget.

In August Mr. Gladstone asked me to go with him on his trip in the 'Grantully Castle,' but I thought I ought not to go away, as my Chairman, Herries, was ill.

In October Mr. Gladstone gained his great triumph over the Turk, whom he caused to evacuate the Dulcigno district by a threat of taking Smyrna—the European concert lasted just long enough.

In that month I was walking across the Horse Guards Parade with Mr. Gladstone, when he asked me if he might submit my name to the Queen for the honour of the Companionship of the Bath. I told him I was flattered by his offer, but for several reasons I would rather decline it. We then parted, but on the next day I received the

following letter, which, of course, overcame my refusal :

10 Downing Street, Whitehall : October 4, 1880.

‘ My dear West,—I think the enclosed ought to remove any scruples you have about accepting the Order.

‘ If you do not care to be congratulated on becoming a Companion, you will, I know, be willing to accept congratulations (which are hereby conveyed, and conveyed in large measure), on your having further earned the marked appreciation and high approval of the great and distinguished man.

‘ This, I know, will be a pleasure to you, and it is a pleasure, a great pleasure, to me to wish you joy accordingly.

‘ Yours always sincerely,

‘ E. HAMILTON.’

10 Downing Street, Whitehall : October 4, 1880.

‘ My dear West,—I hope you will allow me to submit your name to the Queen for a Companionship of the Bath, which is, as you know, the first step on the ladder of the Order.

‘ I think that such an acknowledgment is

due to the high quality and very considerable length of your service for the State and to its agents in very responsible positions, to which no one can bear either a better-informed or a warmer testimony than myself.

‘As a friend I have great pleasure in making this proposal, and as a Minister I am especially gratified to make it at a time when you have given such marked and efficient aid in the introduction and adoption of a change which I hope may remain memorable for good in the annals of your Department.

‘Believe me, sincerely yours,

‘W. E. GLADSTONE.’

In December I started from Charing Cross with Sir John Rose for a trip on the Riviera. In our carriage was Mr. Stephen, now Lord Mount Stephen, and some others, who were going over to Paris on matters connected with the Canadian Pacific Railway. On our way Mr. Stephen received a telegram from some great financier in Paris, asking all the party, in which Rose and I were included, to dine with him that evening. On our arrival I swore

that nothing should induce me to go unless I was allowed to dress. We were received at the station by a very smart gentleman, who received my protestations by throwing open his surtout and showing himself in spotless linen and a very beautiful frock coat : declared he was not dressed, and no one would be. I was very miserable, for dinner to me without change of clothes was always most unappetising, and after a long journey it was horrid. However, carriages were waiting, and we were bundled into them and driven to a gorgeous villa in the Parc Monceau, where we found, to make us more uncomfortable, everybody *en grande tenue*, and most of them decorated. The banquet was like one of those described by Dumas in ‘Monte Cristo.’ We were received in a nearly unfurnished room covered with beautiful tapestries, which noiselessly parted and showed us a table, a mass of flowers and silver. Every guest had seven wineglasses, and I verily believe, in spite of his protestations, that Rose drank seven wines. It was my first experience of such a Parisian dinner. After it the host and his son handed us coffee and cigars.

The following evening Rose and I started for Nice, where we arrived about five o'clock the next afternoon, and were cordially received by Lady Rose, her daughter, Mrs. Stanley Clarke, and Mr. J. S. Morgan.

It would have been impossible to have desired a more agreeable party.

We were lodged at the Grande Bretagne. One day we went to Villefranche; on another we dined at the Reserve and made acquaintance with Thackeray's historical Bouillabaisse, of which I was not worthy; and the next day Sir John and Lady Rose made that beautiful drive along the seashore to Monte Carlo, a very paradise of sinners. The Mediterranean was dazzlingly blue, and the sun entrancingly warm; but what creatures of moods we all are, men and women alike! Many is the laugh we had in after times at Rose's Britannic mood that day. Three remarks throughout that romantic drive, and three only did he make: (1) 'What a beastly glare!' (2) 'What a hideous tree a palm is!' (3) 'I wish that d——d dog would stop barking.'

We chaffed him good-naturedly, and I

paraphrased Macaulay's 'Ode on a Yorkshire Jacobite :'

To my dear wife I sacrificed with pain,
Comfort and home, business and hopes of gain.

Saw Lombard Street in each Lombardian plain
And wept by Arno for my Bank again.

We stayed three or four days at Monte Carlo, and on to San Remo and Geneva, where official ties forced me to say good-bye to my dear friends.

The next year (1881) poor Herries' health was beginning to fail, and the discussion of the Budget again fell in great measure on my shoulders.

Other matters prevented Mr. Gladstone from having the time necessary for a thorough revision of the death duties, but he dealt partially with the probate, not accepting my earnest advice that he should unify the duty, somewhat in the way advocated yearly by Mr. Dodds. I wrote volumes on the subject, and my only satisfaction was in knowing that afterwards Mr. Gladstone acknowledged to me that I had convinced him that I was right. This he repeated to me again on board the 'Pembroke Castle' in 1883.

Herries' health had broken down under his weight of responsibility in the spring, and he never sufficiently recovered to come back to work. A position of a deputy or a *locum tenens* is not an enviable one, but my responsibilities had been lightened and my work had been rendered more easy, not only by the generous support from the best of all Departments, but by the constant intercourse with Lord Frederick Cavendish, who was Secretary to the Treasury, and who was the pleasantest man to do business with that I could imagine.

Late in the month I was fishing at Netherby, when we were asked to Hawarden. After much consideration, seeing that the question of Herries' resignation was imminent, I felt it better to make an excuse, to avoid any idea that I was going there with a purpose, so my wife and daughter went alone and I returned to London.

Going back to dinner on November 11, my servant told me that Mrs. Gladstone had called to congratulate me on my appointment to the Chairmanship of the Board of Inland Revenue! I had heard nothing; but in the evening I

received this letter from Mr. Gladstone, which the messenger had put in his pocket and forgotten to deliver :

10 Downing Street, Whitehall : November 11, 1881.

‘ My dear West,—Sir C. Herries has placed in my hands the resignation of his office, and this proceeding, now virtually accomplished, enables me to proceed (subject to the consideration I have to mention) to the fulfilment of a duty most agreeable to me, both on public and on private grounds ; the duty of requesting you to assume the Chairmanship of the Board of Inland Revenue.

‘ As you are aware, proposals have for some time been before the public in different quarters, which, if taken up by authority, might hereafter issue in very large and important changes in the administration of the revenue, and might involve the making up of the existing machinery with either the severance of what is now united, or the consolidation of what is now separate. There is one duty, and one only, which I think now devolves upon the Government in reference to this subject ; it is that of securing to itself, on

every occasion of a new appointment, an absolute liberty of action for the future. Consequently it should be understood in your case, the first which presents itself, that nothing in the nature either of a vested right, or of an expectation, is to grow out of the change I now propose, but that the office and its conditions will remain subject to the future pleasure of Parliament and of the Government. You will understand my motive in establishing this understanding, and you also will know the spirit in which from time to time, under our system of government, such understandings are conceived and applied.

‘I have only to add that in the event of your acceptance I mean to propose to Mr. Adam Young that he should take the deputy chair.

‘Believe me always,

‘Sincerely yours,

‘W. E. GLADSTONE.’

A. E. West, Esq.

We were naturally delighted at my appointment, and that it should have come from Mr. Gladstone. I was proud, too, at being the youngest Chairman that had ever occupied that

position, though after my retirement I am happy to say that all my successors have been appointed at an earlier age.

I was much pleased with the letters of hearty congratulation I received from many old friends, including Sir George Grey, Sir Charles Wood, Sir Stafford Northcote, and Sir William Stephenson, who had preceded Herries as Chairman; and one from Lord Northbrook, recalling the early days of our official intercourse at the Admiralty. Sir Ralph Lingen's I am tempted to reproduce :

17/11/81.

‘Dear Mr. Algernon West,—I congratulate you on succeeding to the Chairmanship of your Board—a great position—and less likely than ever to be an easy one.

‘I am confident you will discharge the duties with ability and courage—the latter quality being one considerably more in request than supplied under successive Governments.

‘You and the Treasury will have the advantage of being able to rely on each other.

‘Chamberlain's statement about the eve of change was probably misinterpreted as a revela-

tion of Cabinet secrets. I agree with him that it is an opinion which no reflecting and intelligent person can fail to hold.

‘The next generation of administrators *in excelsis* will not lack matter to try their mettle.

‘Yours very truly,

‘R. R. LINGEN.’

Herries' retirement was preceded by that of Alfred Montgomery, my oldest friend, who had been kind to me since boyhood, and had indeed urged upon me to go upon the Board, as he never wished for promotion himself.

When the vacancy for the Deputy-Chairmanship arose, he wrote to Lord Beaconsfield begging not to be considered as a candidate. I was appointed with his approval, but unfortunately for me, Lord Beaconsfield meeting him a few days afterwards, said :

‘My dear Alfred, I wish you had let me nominate you for the deputy chair.’

Then came a little clouding over of our friendship. I knew it was not my fault and I deeply deplored it ; but the cloud soon passed away and our old friendship was renewed. He was the

most genial and social of companions, with a large and long experience of society. He had been Lord Wellesley's private secretary, a friend of D'Orsay's and all the dandies of that day ; was endowed with extraordinary good looks and a bewitching attraction of manner which endeared him to everybody. He was one of the old school of officials, who never failed to brighten and illumine all the dull details of routine work.

Walking down to Somerset House one day, he passed through Leicester Square, where the ceremony of opening was to take place in the afternoon ; the gates were shut, so he walked up to the constable on duty : ' Not open,' he said, ' sir, to the public till after two o'clock.'

' I am not one of the public,' said Alfred, with his most magnificent manner. ' I beg your pardon, sir,' said the constable, and the gates flew open.

One day at the Board, a canon of the Church wrote and asked if he must pay licence duty for a carriage which was used only for taking his infirm parishioners to church on Sundays.

' What do you say, Montgomery ?' said our Chairman. ' Oh,' answered he, with the delight-



Alfred Montgomery.

ful little stammer which served as an ornament rather than a drawback to his speaking, 'tell the canon that the Board will not insist on the old people going to church.' Another of our colleagues murmured, 'I wish people would not ask us hypothetical questions which legally we cannot affirm, but practically we disaffirm.' The latter was too subtle for us to understand.

On one baking hot day the Chairman's private secretary came into the Board-room with his coat off. Montgomery was much shocked, and as the secretary was leaving the room he called him back and said: 'Mr. —, if you should find it convenient in this hot weather to take off your trousers, pray do not let any feeling of respect for the Board stand in your way.'

His sense of humour and wit lasted till the end; one day during his illness the Prince of Wales called on him and shortly afterwards the Princess. On her departure he said to his servant:

'Should the Queen call, say that I am too tired to see her Majesty.'

Curiously enough he once told me that though he had been in the Queen's household since her

Majesty's accession, she had never once spoken to him.

We had another colleague who lived out of town, and always to our amusement came up by the 7 o'clock train, because—as he said—he liked the engine driver. As he complained one day of a bad headache, Montgomery said to him: 'Please do not come up to-morrow, I will do your work and you can stay at home.'

'Oh!' said he, 'I can't; I've got people staying with me!'

How much he felt his retirement from the Board was shown by this short note:

5 Bolton Row, Mayfair, W.: July 21.

'My dear Algy,—Thanks for your kind note.

'The hour of parting is indeed a sad one—more painful than I ever thought it would be. Indeed it must be some days before I am equal to coming to Somerset House or saying "Farewell."

'Yours affectionately,

'A. M.'

Alfred Montgomery complained of having been bitten at a certain country house to Lord ——,

who was more remarkable for his conversational powers than his personal cleanliness :

‘ I have never been bitten there,’ he said.

‘ No,’ said Alfred, ‘ even bugs must draw the line somewhere.’

On December 13, leaving the Board in charge of Adam Young, I started for a trip on Mr. Morgan’s yacht ‘ Pandora,’ which he had hired from Mr. W. H. Smith at Villefranche. Sir John and Lady Rose and Mrs. Mason made up our party, but, sad to say, no Mrs. Clarke.

It would be impossible to imagine a more delightful host than Mr. Morgan, who was absolutely devoid of the unconscious insolence of wealth which is possessed by many successful millionaires.

On the 17th we embarked at early dawn and started for Bastia, in Corsica, where we were met by the President of the Chamber of Commerce, who apologised for not being *en grande tenue*, and acted as cicerone in a dull little, commonplace town.

The next day we reached Île Rousse, a rugged, ruddy coast, as its name shows, with high hills behind and olives everywhere. We

breakfasted with the Pietri family, the head of which was a Corsican, and private secretary to Napoleon III. His little château was two or three miles up in the hills, surrounded with gardens of citron and oranges; a village and church were perched on the summit of the mountain. The house was approached by steps through open verandahs. There was a small library moderately filled with books, and many portraits of the Buonapartes and the Paoli families, and a very fine picture of the Pitti Palace at Florence. All the floors throughout the house were of brick. We were ushered into the *salon*, where a magnificent *déjeuner* was prepared. One of the ladies there told us all the history of Paoli and Corsica, of which he was considered the liberator. The inhabitants, she said, were still all Buonapartists at heart.

The son of Prince Napoleon was now the one they looked to for the re-establishment of the Napoleon dynasty.

We were offered wild boar and moufflon hunting, if we would stay. They showed us a pretty little church, and then we returned in a very rough gale, from which, however, the yacht

was protected. They suffer terribly here from droughts, or the inland parts would be very fertile. Nothing could be more interesting than our visit to this picturesque country of mountains and green valleys, with fruit trees and myrtles. Mr. Morgan is received everywhere in France with enthusiasm, for he made the first great loan to them at the time of the siege of Paris. We stayed stormbound, which drove Rose frantic, as he really in his heart hated yachting, or indeed being away from his dear London; but Lady Rose's wit and spirits never flagged.

In spite of the wind, we reached Ajaccio on the shortest day, a day of sun and warmth.

Colonel Haggart met us at the fort and took us all for a drive to see the birthplace and the home of Napoleon. The furniture was old and broken, but very fascinating. They told us that an old woman, niece of Buonaparte, still lived there in great poverty.

We had a stormy crossing to Terra Nuova, passing all the glorious mountain scenery of the Straits and the islands round Sardinia, including a glimpse of Garibaldi's home in Caprera.

We made some expeditions by rail in Sardinia, and again encountered a boiling, snappy storm on our way to Naples, with which, I confess, I was disappointed. The Bay equalled all I had anticipated, but the town itself fell far short of what I had imagined and pictured to myself. After staying here a short time we saw Capri and Sorrento, and revelled in the blue seas and the dazzling sunshine. We went to Leghorn and passed Spezzia, and there was a talk of a hurried visit to Rome; but I personally was determined not to go there till I went with my wife, who was so looking forward to showing me the place, where, before our marriage, she had spent two happy winters with her grandmother, Lady Grey, and her mother; and so I was glad when the yacht rolled by on our homeward journey to Villefranche.

I went straight to Walmer, and spent long evenings discussing the changes we were to make at a little place called Wanborough we had taken not far from Guildford, which my wife was working hard to get ready for our reception.

CHAPTER XVII

1882—1883

Site and History of Wanborough—Changes in the Government—Resignation of Forster—Lord Frederick Cavendish's Appointment—News of the Phoenix Park Murders—Funeral at Chatsworth—Mr. Gladstone at the Guildhall—Arrest of Mr. Parnell—Sir Stafford Northcote and Mr. Gladstone—Visit to Hayes—Lord Randolph Churchill on the Inland Revenue Board—Mr. Gladstone's Defence—Harry Keppel's Reminiscences of Lord Saltoun—Origin of Sailor's Blue Collars—Invitation to join the Cruise in the 'Pembroke Castle' with Mr. Gladstone—Start from Barrow—Miss Laura Tennant—In Scottish Waters—Arrival of Sir William Harcourt and Sir Andrew Clark—The Laureate's Reading—Question of his Peerage—Visit to Kirkwall—Mr. Gladstone's Speech—Across the North Sea in a Fog—Talks with Mr. Gladstone—Landing at Christiansand—Copenhagen—Dinner at the Palace—Visit of the Royalties—The Princess of Wales and Tennyson—Return Home—Miss Tennant's Charm—Her Visit to Wanborough.

WANBOROUGH was an old-world manor-house, which is described by Green in his 'Making of England' as being on the 'Hog's Back' on the North Downs, a spot which, in all probability, has been a sacred site for every religion which

has been received into Britain from the time of Woden, from whom it derives its name, which was originally 'Wodenborough.'

The manor was granted by William the Conqueror to Geoffrey de Mandeville, Earl of Essex, who was a Crusader of not irreproachable morals, and was excommunicated on his death. The Templars, proud of his achievements, yet not daring to incur the Papal displeasure by burying him, put his body into a coffin, and hung it up on the trees of their garden till the excommunication was removed, and he was buried in the Temple Church, where his effigy now is : the only instance, I am told, of a knight with a flat-topped helmet.

The manor was subsequently seized by Stephen, and given by him to Pharamus de Bologna, who sold it to the Abbey of Waverley. At the dissolution of the monasteries, Henry VIII. bestowed it on his Lord Treasurer and Lord Admiral, the Earl of Southampton, in whose time (1537) the present manor-house was built. Adjacent to it is one of the oldest churches in England, dedicated to St. Bartholomew. It was some time after our taking

it that we discovered that my wife and I were both equally descended from Lord Southampton, through Rachel, Lady Russell.

In the spring of 1882 changes in the Government affected me very considerably. W. E. Forster resigned his office as Chief Secretary for Ireland, and my son Horace, being his secretary, fell out of official employment, though for a time he remained with him. Everybody was sorry, and Lord Spencer asked and obtained a clerkship for him in the House of Commons, from Sir Erskine May, who had already told my wife what pleasure it would give him to help any descendant of Lord Grey's.

Mr. Gladstone wished Lord Hartington to go as Chief Secretary to Ireland, but on his refusal he determined to send his brother, Lord Frederick Cavendish, who was then Financial Secretary to the Treasury. It was a great wrench to him to tear himself away from an office which brought him into direct communication with Mr. Gladstone, and from work in which he delighted; but the post he was offered was one of great difficulty, and of vast responsibility, and I do not believe he hesitated for a

moment in his unselfish determination to do his duty. I deeply regretted the loss he would be to me ; and on my way to Somerset House I called at the Treasury to say ‘ Good-bye,’ but he had not arrived, so I went my way feeling I would postpone my leave-taking till his return, for he was only going to accompany Lord Spencer on his entry into Dublin, and to return on the following Monday to wind up affairs at the Treasury.

I had not been at Somerset House for an hour, before I got a note asking me to go and see him, which I did. He told me it was not a real ‘ Good-bye,’ but he did not want to go without a shake of the hand.

The Press had singularly undervalued his character and his powers, and I was glad to find, on returning to my office, an appreciative notice in the ‘ Economist,’ one of the few papers who properly valued him and his appointment. I cut it out and sent it with a note to Lady Frederick, and on my way home I came across John Morley, the editor, and Yates Thompson, the proprietor, of the ‘ Pall Mall Gazette,’ and told them how utterly wrong they were in their estimate of the man.

He had, at any rate, undertaken the post of difficulty with courage, and a determination to carry to that distracted country a 'message of peace.' How it was to be received we learnt the following day.

Horace and I had gone for Sunday to Wanborough, where, as we were at dinner, we were startled by the terrible news of his assassination, which had been telegraphed to us from London.

On the Saturday evening, my wife and daughter were at the Admiralty, where Lady Emma Baring had been entertaining the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh and a large party at dinner. People were still arriving, when Sir William Harcourt came and immediately took Northbrook aside, and told him the awful news that had come from Dublin. They got Lord Hartington up into the First Lord's private room, and told him of his sad loss.

Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone had been dining elsewhere; he had walked home, and Mrs. Gladstone was stopped at the door of the Admiralty. It was, I think, Lady Louisa Egerton, who drove off at once to Carlton House Terrace

to prevent Lady Frederick Cavendish coming to the party, as she had meant to do.

The news was not generally known that night, but in one way or another a sensation of something being wrong pervaded the people at the party, and it broke up at an early hour.

Immediately Mr. Forster waited on Mr. Gladstone, and generously and gallantly offered to go over to Ireland temporarily to administer Lord Frederick's vacant post. This, however, was not to be; Sir Charles Dilke refused the terribly responsible office, which was filled by Sir George Trevelyan.

During Sir George Trevelyan's first visit to the Secretary's Lodge in Phoenix Park, he went to the window and pushed aside the curtain, and underneath its folds lay the blood-stained coat of poor Frederick Cavendish, which had never been removed from the room into which his body was first brought after the murder.

I went to his funeral—the most impressive I had ever seen—at Chatsworth, and shortly afterwards saw Lady Frederick, who gave me his photograph, taken after his death; there was a sweet smile on his face, and it was difficult to

believe that he had been the victim of a violent death. A nobler, purer soul never was released.

In October I went down to the Guildhall to see the Freedom of the City bestowed on Mr. Gladstone.

Before he began his speech I heard that he was expecting a telegram from Dublin announcing Parnell's arrest. It soon came, and was evidently a relief to him, as he appeared anxiously awaiting it. He immediately said, in an almost painful silence :

‘Within these few minutes I have been informed that towards the vindication of the law, of order, of the right of property, and the freedom of the land, of the first elements of political life and civilisation, the first step has been taken in the arrest of the man who has made himself prominent in his attempt to destroy the authority of the law, and substitute what would end in being nothing more or less than anarchical oppression exercised upon the people of Ireland.’

There was an outburst of cheering, which saddened me when I thought of all that it

meant, and how the Irish troubles were thickening around us.

The following short correspondence may serve to illustrate the friendly personal relations which always existed between Mr. Gladstone and his old private secretary :

10 Downing Street, Whitehall : June 24, 1882.

‘ My dear West,—I observe that Northcote and others of his friends on the front bench have observed a temperate and Parliamentary course in questions about Egypt, while many of the supporters have been unruly, and their unruliness appears to have received distinct countenance from the speech of Salisbury last night in the House of Lords.

‘ I do not like to offer public acknowledgments to Northcote on this ground, as I am afraid I might increase the difficulties of his position, which it is one of my primary duties to avoid.

‘ If you had an opportunity of letting his son know informally that these are my ideas I should be obliged to you.

‘ Believe me, sincerely yours,

‘ W. E. GLADSTONE.’

June 27, 1882.

‘My dear Mr. Gladstone,—I yesterday had an opportunity of communicating to Sir Stafford Northcote the substance of your letter to me of the 24th. He expressed himself as much gratified at your recognition of the conduct of the front Opposition Bench in trying to avoid embarrassing the Government during the present crisis. He is fully conscious of the difficulties which surround the Government, and intends to avoid, as far as possible, adding to them. Of course, he added that he made no secret of his disapproval of the Government policy, which he probably will, before very long, express in public.

‘Yours,

‘ALGERNON WEST.’

Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P.

In November we were staying with Everard Hambro at Hayes, in Kent, the historic house in which Lord Chatham lived and died, and where William Pitt was born. I had often when there walked over to church at Wickham, where many of the Wests were buried, and notably Gilbert West, who was a friend of Pitt’s,

and to whom a great mural tablet is erected. His house, now inhabited by Miss Brownlow Hall, was in the village, and she, hearing that I was at Hayes, sent me, through Mrs. Hambro, a photograph of it, and one Sunday Horace and I went to thank her. She lived there with her sister, and showed us most kindly over the house, which she had added to since Gilbert West's time, and evidently took a great interest in the family and the place.

On June 1, 1883, I went to see Mr. Gladstone on the subject of Lord Randolph Churchill's motion on the recent order of my Board, forbidding Inland Revenue officers to use Parliamentary influence to obtain additional salaries; he said: 'Of course you are coming down to the House?' I said: 'I have no intention of doing so, as I think Lord Randolph is quite capable of alluding to me as Serjeant Buzfuz did to Pickwick, saying: "Let me tell the defendant, if he be in court, that it would have been more decent in him, more becoming, in better judgment and in better taste, if he had stayed away." But if you really insist on my going, I will, of course.' 'Certainly,' he

said, 'you have got me into this, and must not desert me.' So he took my arm, and we went down to the House together, where I had to sit under the gallery, listening to a most violent personal attack on me and Northcote. It was evident that Lord Randolph was only the mouth-piece of somebody else, and had not got up his lesson as well as usual.

Then rose Mr. Gladstone, and by his eloquent defence more than compensated me for the pain I had endured at Lord Randolph's hands. He said: 'Mr. West is a gentleman who has risen step by step to a high position in the public service; and every one of those steps has been achieved by energetic and able exertion. The duties of a private secretary are most arduous, and those of a private secretary to the Prime Minister are certainly arduous far beyond all others. And it was Mr. West's merit, and nothing else, which led to his appointment; an appointment subsequently recognised by our political opponents, so that he stands in the position of a gentleman whose ability has been acknowledged by both sides of the House.'

Complimentary words followed from Sir Stafford Northcote, Childers, and my old friend Sam Whitbread, the motion was defeated in a small dinner-hour House by 120 to 37, and I went away triumphant, and took the news to where my wife was dining. It is pleasant to think that in later years, when Lord Randolph and I came to know each other better, this incident was entirely forgotten.

One day at dinner Harry Keppel, who came to meet Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone, told us that when he was taking Lord Saltoun, as Commander-in-Chief, to China, he asked him whether there was any truth in the oft-repeated order of the Duke of Wellington, ‘Up, Guards, and at them!’ at Waterloo.

He said, ‘None,’ and he ought to have known, for there he had commanded the light companies of the 2nd Brigade. He was standing by the Duke when the Guards were lying down, and he heard the Duke call up an aide-de-camp and give him some orders, which he galloped off to execute. On his return he saluted the Duke, and fell back to the rear. In a few minutes the Duke called him up, and said :

‘ Did you deliver my orders to General ——?’

‘ Yes, your Grace,’ said the aide-de-camp.

‘ And what did he say?’

‘ He said he’d see your Grace d——d first.’

The Duke took up his glass and looked in his direction, and leant over to Lord Saltoun, saying, ‘ By G—— he’s right.’

Harry Keppel also told us that the blue collars worn by sailors had their origin in the dressing of the pigtails, which Harry recollected, when a blue cloth was put on the men’s shoulders to keep the grease off their jackets; the pigtails disappeared, and the collars remained to this day.

I was at Wanborough in September when I received a message asking me if I would join Mr. Gladstone and his party in a cruise round the west coast of Scotland in the ‘Pembroke Castle,’ one of Sir Donald Currie’s line of Cape ships. We were to embark at Barrow. I hesitated, but my wife and daughter persuaded me not to miss such an opportunity of again being with Mr. Gladstone; so, on September 7, after dining with Lord Welby and Sir John Rose at the Oxford and Cambridge Club, I started

by the midnight train from Euston to Barrow, where I arrived at about ten o'clock on the morning of the 8th, and, finding a brother of Sir Donald Currie's, I went with him on board the ship. She was lying in a narrow channel by Peel Island, the captain rather anxiously awaiting the Prime Minister, to get out of the channel, as it was blowing pretty stiffly, and there were only a few yards to spare when the vessel swung at her anchor. At about five or six o'clock Mr. Gladstone and his party came off, under a heavy swell, in a steam tug. The party then consisted of Mr., Mrs., and Miss Mary Gladstone, Miss C. Gladstone and Herbert Gladstone; the Poet Laureate—Alfred Tennyson—and his son Hallam; Arthur Lyttelton, Sir Donald Currie, Sir Arthur Gordon, and others. In half an hour afterwards came Miss x Tennant, who had been kept behind, and how she came I don't yet know; but this I do know, that I am grateful that she arrived, for she became the heart and soul and glory of the whole party, and entranced everybody, from the sailors to the Prime Minister, with her charm and cleverness, her good-humour, and her over-

flowing spirits, which placed everybody at her feet. One of the sailors whom she asked whether he was married, looked at her and said, 'Yes, Ma'am, I am sorry to say I am;' and this she said was the highest and most subtle compliment she had ever received. We immediately got under way, and proceeded to Ramsay Bay under a breeze and cloudy sky, where we anchored for the night.

On Sunday, the 9th, at 5 A.M. sleep became difficult from the noise of weighing anchor, so I went on deck as we passed through the Mull of Galloway and rounded Ailsa Craig, which was covered with shrieking sea-birds. At about eleven o'clock we had a full Church service in the saloon, Arthur Lyttelton officiating, and Mr. Gladstone reading the lessons. We passed the afternoon in a strong breeze and heavy rain, but the 'Pembroke Castle' cut through the waves with hardly any motion at all. We anchored that night off Jura. On the 10th the rain had ceased and the weather cleared, though it was still blowing fresh when we anchored at Oban; here we were met by Sir James Ramsden, and taken in his yacht 'Jessie' into the bay and

then round to Dunstaffnage Castle, where we landed and met Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone, who had driven there. The sun had come out brilliantly and the little bay was lovely, and the sea a cerulean blue. On the 11th we sailed through the Sound of Mull, passing Tobermory and the dreaded Ardnamurchan Point, till we came opposite Loch Hourn; here we got into Mr. Currie's yacht, and sailed right up into the loch. I had a long talk to Lord Dalhousie, who had joined our party at Oban the day before. Nothing could have been lovelier than our sail through the sunny little loch, covered with fishing boats just returned from the herring fishing. On re-embarking on the 'Pembroke Castle' we repassed Ardnamurchan, and just as we were in the midst of our tumble we were hailed by the burly form of the Home Secretary, who stood on the deck of a little yacht hardly big enough to hold him; and so at the most inopportune moment we stopped and took him aboard, with his son, Lulu, and then on again to Tobermory, which we entered for dinner, before which Sir Andrew Clark, Lady and Miss Clark joined our party.

It was impossible to know Mr. Gladstone well without becoming acquainted with his Æsculapius, Sir Andrew Clark. A Scotsman of pronounced opinions on most subjects, he was rugged and dogmatic in his assertions and his conversations on religion as well as medicine. His admiration of Mr. Gladstone was almost as great as Mr. Gladstone's faith in him. Many are the good stories—too well known to be repeated—of his emphatic directions to his patients. He always declared that no one ever was known to have died of old age.

Lord Granville, dining with him when President of the Royal College of Physicians, asked the company if in their long experience they had ever known a case of cause following effect. They all denied its possibility. 'Not even,' said Lord Granville, 'when the doctor follows his patient to the grave?'

Sir William Harcourt was full of the joke of my having been described in the newspapers as 'The Hon. and Rev. Algernon West.' Our party were by this time getting to know each other well. We had settled down to our places at dinner, though there was always a contest as

to who should sit near Miss Tennant, and we were really sorry for any addition to our party.

Sir William directly after dinner proposed to smoke, saying he was sure the Poet Laureate, who had sung of

The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds

would not object. Mr. Tennyson, who had given one the impression of being somewhat *farouche* and rough at first, had soon softened down. We had many pleasant conversations together, and he had begun reading to our small party, at the instigation of Miss Tennant, in the smoking-room in the mornings and evenings. He was very much offended on one occasion by detecting Mr. Gladstone apparently asleep during his reading; oddly enough he preferred his dramas to his other poems, though he was fond of reading 'Maud' and the 'Grandmother.' I never joined in the chorus of thanks and admiration of his reading, but I think he saw I was an appreciative listener, for he always insisted on my being present. One evening the men and boys on board sang to us, a cabin-boy calling on Mr. Gladstone and Mr.

Tennyson to join him in his chorus. Sir Arthur Gordon had with him a Fiji servant, a fine-looking fellow in costume, who showed us how to kindle a fire by rubbing two pieces of wood together.

On leaving Tobermory we rounded Ardnurchan, for the third time trying to get to Staffa and Iona, but it was too rough, so we went inside Skye to Gairloch, where we arrived at mid-day; here we all landed in the rain. Mrs. Gladstone, Dalhousie, Miss Tennant, and Herbert and I started walking towards Loch Maree, but after a couple of miles carriages picked up all but Herbert Gladstone and myself, who returned to the ship and fished.

About this time sprang up a question as to whether Tennyson should be made a peer and I was intrusted with the negotiations, which were rather amusing, and ended ultimately in the affair being settled and the peerage accepted.

On arriving at Kirkwall, in the Orkneys, we were accompanied by the burgesses of the town and saw St. Magnus' Cathedral, subsequently going for a long drive to see a prehistoric

tomb, where we had luncheon ; on our return we drove to the Kirk, where the freedom of the town was presented to Mr. Gladstone and Tennyson, Mr. Gladstone making a most touching speech. There was something rather comic in the chapel arrangements, and Miss Laura Tennant, in whom the sense of humour was always keen, could hardly control her merriment, but when Mr. Gladstone spoke it changed into a phase of rapt attention, as he spoke for himself and for the Poet Laureate: ‘The words,’ he said, ‘we speak have wings and fly away ; the words of Mr. Tennyson are of a higher order. I anticipate for him immortality. In some distant time people will say, looking at your roll, “The Prime Minister, who was he ; what did he do ? We know nothing about him, but the Poet Laureate has written his own song on the hearts of his countrymen, which can never die.” ’

Nearly all the town had closed its shops in honour of the occasion and so everybody bought photographs at the only shop that was open, and this turned out to be that of a Tory who had refused to shut his.

A thick fog had now set in, which was not propitious for crossing the North Sea, which had been determined on, for Tennyson had suggested a run across to Norway. A young lady of our party, however, thought a fog was safe at any rate, and said she was sure that if it became rough in mid-ocean, Sir Donald, who was so kind, would anchor at once! The fog lasted all night and we suffered from the terrible sirens, and in the morning we felt our way out, but it came on worse and was very disagreeable, seeing all the boats being provisioned, lights being fastened to life preservers, fog-horn blowing, etc. However, about eleven o'clock it cleared, and we went ahead full speed.

I had a very long talk to Mr. Gladstone on financial matters. Talking of Lord Lyndhurst's life, which was being written, he said that of the six Lord Chancellors he had sat with he thought him the most useful as a Cabinet Minister. Once when he was consulting him on some Parliamentary question connected with Lord John Russell's Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, Lord Brougham was present. Lord Lyndhurst was then crippled and infirm. Lord Brougham said: 'Ah, Lyndhurst,

how I wish I could give you some of my walking powers in exchange for some of your brains ! ’

Then we talked of how the Government had maintained its strength after the secessions of the Duke of Argyll, W. E. Forster, and John Bright ; he said the Duke being a peer had not much weight, that Forster’s obstinacy was most extraordinary when Secretary for Ireland, and he knew of no one instance in which he had taken his advice or profited by his experience ; Bright’s resignation, he said, had he shown anything but the loyalty with which he had acted, would have been very serious.

We passed Cape Wrath, where I am told we rolled a bit, but I was asleep, and after a splendid run, about mid-day on the 14th, the sea running very high, we approached Norway, taking on board a pilot, in the clever management of whose boat Mr. Gladstone was much interested. About three o’clock we all landed at Christiansand, a little town, bright, clean, and built of white painted wood ; then we drove seven miles through a green, prosperous, fair country to a fiord, crossed the river in punts, and went to see a great steam sawmill, where all the pine trees

were sawn up and thrown into the river, where they floated down till at certain points they were collected and made into rafts. All the peasants looked prosperous and well-to-do in their little holdings. The ponies were like small Roman horses with high manes hogged; on reaching the river we got into a small passenger steamer and returned through pretty wooded banks to Christiansand, where we re-embarked and sailed for Copenhagen; we arrived there at about half-past five on Sunday evening, September 16, having had service going up the Sound, past Elsinore, where I had been twenty-eight years ago with Jervoise Smith on our return from the Baltic. Nothing could have been prettier than our arrival in the afternoon sun at Copenhagen; C. Vivian and Gosling, the Secretary to the Legation, came on board, and the latter took me for the Poet Laureate, and told me how delighted the King and Queen were to welcome me in their dominions. After dinner, Herbert, Miss Tennant, and a little party of us landed and went to Tivoli, which was lighted up by the electric light and innumerable lamps on all the trees and over all the lakes; nothing

could exceed the lovely effect. The music and the behaviour of the people were admirable. I saw a private soldier standing there, and asked Mr. Gosling if he was a regular or a *Landwehr*. He said: 'Oh, a regular; let me introduce you to him, he is a nephew of the King.' I asked him to come and see the 'Pembroke Castle,' but he said his military studies and duties gave him no time; he had to serve three years as a private.

We were all invited to dine at the Palace on the following day; but happily it was decided that only six should go, so Arthur Lyttelton, Herbert Gladstone, and Miss C. Gladstone, Miss Tennant and I, after having seen Copenhagen all the morning, dined with Gosling and his pretty daughters at Tivoli, where we had an excellent dinner, charming music, and then went to his apartments to hear music again till near twelve o'clock, when we joined the party from the Palace at the quay and re-embarked with them.

Sir Donald Currie gave us a pleasant account of the dinner at the Palace, where he was charmed at the cleverness and simplicity of

the Royal family—the dinner, the wine, etc. We heard that the whole party was coming to luncheon on board on the following day.

Next morning we all went ashore again and bought crockery, flowers, etc., and got back by one o'clock to see the royalties come aboard, which was a lovely sight; they came in great state barges from the Russian and Danish yachts which were in harbour—forty-one in all. The party included the Czar and Czarina and Czarewitch of Russia, and, I think, a younger brother; the Czar a magnificent man in uniform, the Czarewitch a thorough Tartar-looking face, but a jolly boy; the King and Queen of Denmark—she must have been very pretty—Crown Prince and Princess and their son; King and Queen of Greece and their children; Princess of Wales and Prince Eddie and his sisters; Princess Mary of Hanover, Prince John of Glücksburg, etc. Never was there such an assembly of royalties on a ship before. They had not been on board three minutes when the Czar had disappeared, having, as I afterwards ascertained, got hold of the engineer and gone to examine every part of the ship and her machinery. Andrew Cockerell and

Miss Knollys were in waiting on the Princess of Wales, and reproached me for not having gone to dinner at the Palace last night. All the foreign Ministers in Copenhagen were there also. I had been busy with Mrs. Vivian, at Sir Donald Currie's request, in trying to arrange where all the royalties should sit at luncheon, but I avoided going down myself. The Czar said he would rather be King of Denmark with its peasant proprietors than Czar of All the Russias ; he was an object of immense interest to me as being so personally great : the other royalties were surrounded by constitutions, ministries, public opinion, etc., but he could go to war to-morrow if he liked of his own motion. At luncheon Mr. Gladstone in a few words proposed the health of the King and Queen of Denmark, the King thanking him in English ; he then proposed the health of the Czar and Czarina, the Emperor returning thanks in French.

I kept in the background, but the Princess of Wales spoke to me and introduced me to the King of Greece. After luncheon it was proposed that Tennyson should read something, and on his saying that 'one man could lead a

horse to the water, but ten could not make him drink,' the Princess of Wales said, 'Oh, but I can,' and led him up to the little smoking-room, where, surrounded by all these crowned heads, with his great wideawake on his head, he read the 'Grandmother.'

As soon as the royalties had disembarked we got under way and left the harbour amid the cheers and salutes of the Russian and Danish men-of-war, the sailors manning the yards. We took some time warping our ship out, and only caught sight of the Danish yacht steaming into Elsinore as we passed by in the gloaming. The weather and glass were somewhat threatening, but we got through the windy zone and steamed under a glorious moon across the North Sea, arriving in the Thames on the evening of the 19th—after sighting the low-lying lands of Yarmouth, and the fishing fleet off the Dogger Bank—and ran up till about eight or nine o'clock, when we anchored, meaning to get to Gravesend early on the next morning, but a heavy fog kept us still until ten o'clock, when we ventured up, passing some emigrant ships, who cheered us, off Gravesend and Tilbury Fort, where we landed

and had a great reception. On reaching Downing Street I went to try to get Lord Granville to come with Mr. Gladstone to Wanborough; but he was away, so our party fell through and I went alone, to find Lady Grey there.

Our cruise had in every way been a marvel of success. It had done Mr. Gladstone and all of us great good as far as health was concerned, and our visit to Copenhagen was full of interest. I felt very grateful to everybody, and everybody felt very grateful to Miss Tennant, who had really been the life and soul of the whole party.

To describe her to those who never came under her charm would be far beyond my power, while those who knew and loved her would never consider any description of her as adequate. She was a woman of the greatest genius I had ever come across: possessing a marvellous vitality and a heart full of the real enthusiasm of humanity, and large enough to hold the entire world. She was not of very striking beauty, but had a soft, appealing, and almost pathetic look of sympathy with those she talked to. Those who have read her unpublished stories can alone speak of their charm and pathos. When shortly after



Walker & Boutwell, 17

The Hon. Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton
From a drawing by the Marchioness of Granby

our cruise she said she was coming to Wamborough, I deeply regretted having praised her and spoken of her in a way which in another's eyes could not but be extravagant. My wife was not a woman given to sudden and violent friendships, but Miss Laura came and conquered her, as she had conquered all she ever met, and my praises became only a faint echo of what my wife thought of her.

Soon after my return we had a pleasant visit from Lord Granville and Mrs. Stephenson, the latter for a good long time. In October we went to Walmer, which was as usual pleasant; the Russian and Danish Ministers were there, and one night Sir Evelyn Wood came, on his way back to Egypt. He talked a great deal, and was full of praise of the Egyptian soldiers and contempt for their officers, who, he said, were the first to run at Tel-el-Kebir.

CHAPTER XVIII

1884

Mr. Gladstone on Free Trade and Protection—Anecdotes of Lord Lytton—General Gordon's Mission to the Soudan—Meeting at the War Office—Gordon's Demand for Zebehr—Lord Acton's Library—Panizzi's Last Days—Conversations with Mr. Morley and Lord Acton—Mr. Gladstone's Portrait at Somerset House—Funeral of the Duke of Albany—Lord Lyons and George Sheffield—Conversations with Lord Granville—Cabinets and Gossip—Earthquake in London—Lord Granville at Wanborough—Mr. Gladstone on Seceders—Letters from Sir Erskine May and Sir John Lambert—Anecdote of Bishop Percy and Mr. Justice Maule—Mr. Gladstone on Lord Randolph Churchill—Liberals Improved as Speakers by Secession—Mr. Gladstone's Height—Dynamite Explosions in London—Mr. Browning's Story of Ruskin—Mr. Gladstone's View of Froude's 'Carlyle'—Tenniel on the 'Punch' Cartoons—Charles Clifford's Recollections of Rogers and the Grevilles—Hallam Tennyson's Wedding—A Thursday Breakfast with Mr. Gladstone—The Lords and the Franchise—Death of Lady Halifax—Welby's Suggested Inscription for Mr. Gladstone's Bust—Miss Tennant and her Sister visit Wanborough—Lord Northbrook's Mission to Egypt—His Quixotic Loyalty—Mr. Gladstone and Abraham Hayward—Death of Lord Ampthill.

On January 2, Mr. Gladstone, Frederick Leveson-Gower, Eddie Hamilton, Henry Keppel, and

Lord Morton, dined with us. Mr. Gower told us when Free Trade was carried, Lord George Bentinck bet him 20%. Protection would be re-enacted within two years. Mr. Gladstone said that was not so absurd a bet at the time as it appeared now ; Lord George Bentinck was alive, and his death made great changes. Had he lived he would probably have coerced Derby, and between them they would have kept Disraeli under, and made a strong fight for Protection. When Lord Derby left the Cabinet he said he disapproved of Free Trade, but that when it was carried he should do all he could to support it ; yet in the beginning of 1849 he announced he should do all he could to oppose it, having been persuaded by Lord George Bentinck, whose life, had it been spared, would have affected politics very much.

After that the Leadership was offered to Goulburn, who declined it, and a triumvirate was appointed—Lord Grantham, Herries, and Disraeli ; the two former spoke for Protection, but Disraeli threw them over and soon established himself as Leader of the Tory Party.

Neate, who was Member for Oxford City,

was a Freetrader till Protection was abolished, then became a Protectionist, and published a book on the subject.

Sir Robert Peel, to his death, believed that a strong fight would be made for Protection, 'a womanish superstition.'

After dinner, whist was proposed by Mr. L. Gower, but Mr. Gladstone said it might affect his head; he told me his constant marvel was how well the Beer Act had worked, and said he should like a collection of photographs of those men with whom he had been closely associated in official life, not M.P.'s, but Civil servants.

A few days later, at Reginald Capel's we again met Mr. Gladstone, and were discussing Lord Lytton's 'Life.' Lord Essex told us how he had met Lord Lytton at a wedding, when he said: 'Are you come to one of these intolerable necessities?'

Talking of the lines supposed to be written by the son on his father's election for Hertfordshire, which had this verse:

Who came from Hertford in a chaise,
And lavished anything but praise
Upon the Author of my days?
My Mother.

Lord Essex said Lord Lytton's influence with the Press prevented their ever being published.

In the beginning of the year the Press was clamouring for Gordon to be sent out to Egypt. Gordon had passed a life of perpetual warfare as an engineer in the Crimea, as a commander of the 'ever-victorious army' in China, and as Governor of the Equatorial Provinces of Central Africa. In 1880 he had, oddly enough, accepted the post of private secretary to Lord Ripon, Governor-General of India, a post which he resigned on reaching Bombay, and had again gone to China at Sir Robert Hart's request, to mediate between Russia and China. He then accepted the Commandantship of the Colonial Forces at the Cape, which he resigned in 1882. Subsequently he entered the service of the King of the Belgians in the Congo, from which he was recalled by the English Government. On January 10 a meeting was summoned of those Cabinet Ministers who happened to be in town, at the War Office, where Gordon was asked to meet them.

They consisted of Lord Granville, Lord Hartington, Sir Charles Dilke, and Lord Northbrook.

At this meeting Gordon agreed to go to Suakim to report upon the best means of giving effect to the policy of the Government. Gordon was to act under Evelyn Baring, to which he made no objection. He did not think the Mahdi's insurrection very serious, as the tribes under him would not be ready to go very far from their homes.

It was further arranged that Gordon was to perform such other duties as might be entrusted to him by the Government through Evelyn Baring.

The 'Helicon' was ordered to take him to Suakim: but his original orders were extended to enable him to go on a mission *via* Korosko on the Nile, to withdraw the garrison from Khartoum.

Gordon applied for the services of Zebehr, the old slave-owner; but though Mr. Gladstone thought he ought not to refuse any instrument required by our Agent, the Cabinet would not face the appointment of a man with so baneful a character. Gordon, instead of withdrawing the garrison, reached Khartoum, where he proclaimed the independence of the Soudan and

sanctioned the retention of slaves, and established himself at Khartoum. The catastrophe that awaited him we all know now.

On February 16 I dined with my wife at Mrs. Gladstone's; Sir Walter and Lady James, John Morley, Lord Acton, and Spencer Lyttelton were there. After dinner we talked about libraries, Lord Acton saying he had over 30,000 historical volumes; 'and,' added Mr. Gladstone, 'he knows the exact shelf on which every volume is.' This brought us to Panizzi, and his sad, ill days before his death, which Mr. Gladstone attributed greatly to the fact of his living in Bloomsbury Square, which he did to be near his dear British Museum. It was out of the way, and he was much worse off than Abraham Hayward during his later days in St. James's, where his friends could and did look in and cheer him up. Lord Granville was calling on Panizzi and making excuses for the rarity of his visits, when the poor old man said very irritably, 'I hope you'll never come again.' But he soon recovered his temper, as who would not with Lord Granville!

A literary controversy was talked of between

Panizzi and one Mazzini, who, as Lord Acton said, wanted in the revolutionary days to publish all the manuscripts in the Vatican. His namesake, the great Mazzini, and Saffi, who married a cousin of mine, Miss Crawford, wished to destroy St. Peter's, as the symbol of Catholicism.

After dinner I had a long talk with John Morley about the state of politics and the House of Commons. He had a high opinion of the power and 'nimbleness' of Lord Randolph Churchill, but hoped for the sake of all parties that he would never lead any.

He regretted the failing health of Sir Stafford Northcote, and remarked that the class of men who made a game and an occupation of politics alone was new.

Home with Lord Acton and talked of the prospect of Mr. Gladstone being able to retire from active political life, which seemed to me to lessen as he grew older.

It was in this year that Mrs. Gladstone sent us an engraving of Mr. Gladstone for our Board Room at Somerset House, and I, as chairman, had to thank her for it.

Board Room, Inland Revenue, Somerset House :
March 7, 1884.

‘ My dear Mrs. Gladstone,—I must send you the sincere thanks of the Board and myself for the beautiful print that you have presented to us of Mr. Gladstone.

‘ To us who have had the honour and delight of serving under him, the value of it is indeed great.

‘ To those who succeed us it will serve as a recollection of the greatest Chancellor of the Exchequer that has ever lived, while to all of us it will give a noble example and inducement to strive and, at a great distance, humbly to follow him in his career of unselfish devotion to public duty.

‘ ALGERNON WEST.’

On April 5 I attended officially the funeral of the Duke of Albany at Windsor. It was a fine sight, as all military pageants in St. George’s are. The Queen was there near the coffin, which was borne by Seaforth Highlanders. Somewhat of the impressiveness was taken off by the fact of the poor Prince’s health and

occupations having been so very unmilitary as to make a military funeral very incongruous. The sun shone out in the midst of the service, and Chopin's music was very effective.

On coming to town, I sent my daughter, Constance, off with Lord and Lady Granville *viâ* Leatherhead, while I followed with F. Leveson-Gower *viâ* Gomshall to Holmbury. The whole Granville family, Sir George Dasent, and Lord Lymington were there, as well as Lord Lyons, our Ambassador at Paris, with his 'Fidus Achates,' George Sheffield, who did all the talking, while Lord Lyons listened with a contented smile.

It was said that when Sheffield went away for his holiday he took the ambassadorial *chef*, leaving the kitchen-maid for Lord Lyons.

Sheffield had been a long time in the diplomatic service, but had no ambitions beyond Paris, where he knew everybody and was very popular.

On the next morning Lord Granville drove me to Dorking, where we got news of the enormous majority on the Franchise Bill (142). Of course it was a sore temptation to Goschen to join the Tories, whom he might lead so easily

and with whom his interests really allied him. Lord Granville told me of his rebuke to Lord Sherbrooke, when he voted against the Government after taking a viscountcy, and how well he took it, and how cordially he had acted since, as loyally as Lord Aberdare and John Bright. He told Lord Strathnairn one day a question he was going to put in the House of Lords was out of order. Lord Strathnairn was very indignant, and turned his back and walked away. Lord Granville said : ‘Oh, Strathnairn, did you know Lady S—— was in town?’ Lord Strathnairn was at once mollified !

Talking of Cabinets, he said the one in which secrets had been best kept was Gladstone’s first Cabinet. Mr. Gladstone followed Sir Robert Peel’s example in always writing an agenda for the day. He was too much a man of business to like gossip at a Cabinet, whereas Lord Aberdeen often sat for hours listening and never saying a word. This Cabinet had been very leaky. Charles Villiers and Lord Clarendon were fond of talking too much in society.

He said how few people knew what a great man Sir George Grey was in Council ; that in

Lord Palmerston's and Russell's Governments he was a dictator, and used to bowl over Lord Westbury on points of law.

Who could be Mr. Gladstone's biographer? He would be overwhelmed by materials, and a syndicate at least would be required to write the life.

On April 22, at 9.20, I was awakened in St. James's Palace by two distinct shocks of earthquake. I thought it was Horace's dog scratching itself under my bed, and afterwards that it was the steam-roller, but during the day heard that shocks had been felt very seriously in Essex.

Lord Granville was our constant and delightful guest at Wanborough, riding and driving all about the country. I had hit upon a lovely spot on the Hog's Back, in a wood overlooking the hills away to the South Downs, which I suggested should be bought by him on which to build a house. He commissioned me to buy it for him, which I did after a long correspondence with Mr. More-Molyneux, who was the owner of Loseley. A hundred letters from Lord Granville lie before me, but the saddest of all was that in which he abandoned hope of being our neighbour.

Foreign Office : April 27, 1884,

‘ My dear Algy,—I still think the chalk pits are the best site in England, and the most convenient. But in a fortnight I shall enter my seventieth year, and my building courage is diminishing.

‘ You said that your friend could find no site he liked better, and that he regretted the pits. But this is the sort of thing people are apt to think when they cannot get a thing.

‘ Would it be worth while to tell him that he may have my rights, on payment of anything I have disbursed in legal expenses, rents, planting, etc. etc. ?

‘ If you do not want him, or if he refuses, please do not mention my offer.

‘ Yours,

‘ G.’

On May 15 I called at Downing Street, and had tea with Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone. He was in good spirits and talked about the Revenue, and then about the debate of want of confidence. He thought Goschen had behaved well, and he had written to him to say so : he showed me his

answer, which was very nice ; but Forster had made a distinct accusation against them of acting against their consciences. I said I supposed it was very difficult, looking at the many examples to the contrary, for a man to leave a Government and to behave loyally afterwards. Mr. Gladstone said : ‘ I once did so and behaved well, and once did so and behaved badly. When I left Peel’s Government, I made a long and strong speech for the Government on the Sugar Duties. Peel, who rarely employed exaggerated language, turned round and said to me, “ That was a wonderful speech.” ’

‘ The other time, when I left Palmerston, I found myself in sharp conflict with Lewis on all matters of finance ; one of his doctrines being that you should impose as many small Customs duties as you could. But when I was back with him, I found that I was still in conflict with him on all such matters in the Cabinet, and so I was satisfied that my outside conduct was not the result of anything but conviction and real difference.’

After Mr. Gladstone had gone to the House of Commons, Mrs. Gladstone said he had felt

Forster's conduct very much, and it was hard after all his loyalty to him when in Ireland, when he knew he was a failure, and how he had said : ' I shall swim or sink with him.'

Among our visitors at Wanborough were Andrew Hichens and his charming wife, both of whom were enamoured of the site Lord Granville had chosen, and readily took advantage of the opportunity of buying it, and erecting on it, with the help of Mr. Devey, a beautiful house ; my son, who was assisting him at that time, spending three months there as clerk of the works.

A conversation I had with Mr. Gladstone—already mentioned—put it into my head to make a collection of photographs of all the distinguished Civil servants who had been associated with him in his official career, and put them into a screen, which he constantly kept on his table.

I do not know whether he, or those who gave me their photographs, were more pleased ; so many of them wrote to me appreciating the honour. Sir Erskine May's and Sir John Lambert's letters are only specimens of many I received.

Board Room, Inland Revenue, Somerset House :
May 19, 1884.

‘ My dear Mr. Gladstone,—Some time ago you told me that you would like a collection of photographs of those Civil servants who have had the honour of being closely associated with you in your official duties. I have done my best to make this collection, which I now beg you to accept.

‘ On looking over the roll of distinguished men I feel that I owe you an apology for the irresistible vanity that has led me to include myself among the number.

‘ ALGERNON WEST.’

10 Downing Street, Whitehall: May 21, 1884.

‘ My dear West,—I hardly know how to thank you for your most kind and most interesting gift. It is a noble record of a Civil service, never, I suppose, excelled in any age or country. Still, I am somewhat ashamed when I think of the time and pains it must have cost you, for which my cordial thanks are indeed but an unworthy acknowledgment.

‘ Believe me, sincerely yours,

‘ W. E. GLADSTONE.’

Milford House, Elms Road, Clapham Common, S.W. :

May 24, 1884.

‘ My dear Mr. West,—It was very kind and considerate of you to send me an extract from Mr. Gladstone’s letter.

‘ I feel that it is a great privilege to have my photograph associated with those of the class of which he speaks in such commendatory terms, and the knowledge which I have of their high qualifications and distinguished merits enables me to appreciate that privilege all the more.

‘ I shall place your letter with the many other records which I possess of Mr. Gladstone’s singular generosity in estimating the services of those who have had the happiness of working under him.

‘ Believe me, very truly yours,

‘ JOHN LAMBERT.’

Algernon West, Esq., C.B.

House of Commons : May 29, 1884.

‘ My dear West,—Pray accept my best thanks for your kind letter, and its very interesting inclosure.

‘ Mr. Gladstone knows, and is ever ready to acknowledge, the obligations of statesmen to

those who labour with them, silently and unobtrusively, in the government of the State.

‘He could even tell you of reputations which have been won, or sustained, in great measure by the vigour and capacity of advisers, of whom the world has known nothing.

‘Of such services he has himself shown a generous appreciation. His own gifts are so transcendent that he is able to discern and value the merits of fellow-workers, without jealousy or grudging.

‘I shall hope, some day, to be allowed to see the “noble record” of which he speaks in terms so flattering.

‘I am, yours very truly,

‘T. ERSKINE MAY.’

Algernon E. West, Esq., C.B.

On May 22 Mr. Gladstone, Sir Farrer and Lady Herschell, and Ellis Gosling dined with us.

Herschell told us that the Bishop of Carlisle (Percy) was very famous for his bad dinners, food, and drink. One day he entertained the Bar, and the junior members, disgusted with their scanty food and wine, became rather noisy

at the end of the table. The Bishop remarked on it to Mr. Justice Maule, who said :

‘ Yes, my Lord, it is apt to happen when men take a little wine on an empty stomach.’

Mr. Gladstone discussed various politicians. He thought Lord John Manners a much abler man than was generally acknowledged by his party. He admitted Randolph Churchill’s great cleverness, but did not think he would be a leader in the immediate future. If he came into office and was rude to permanent officials, he would have some severe lessons to learn.

Mr. Gladstone asserted as an invariable and deplorable rule that Liberals who deserted their party improved as speakers in Parliament : Bernal Osborne and Lowe were strong instances in point, and he often regretted, when Lowe was in office, his speeches when in Opposition.

He did not know of any examples on the other side, and he thought it was much to the credit of the Liberal party that it still existed after the loss of so many good men.

‘ As a boy,’ he said, ‘ I was remarkably short, and my greatest ambition, a very moderate one, was up to fourteen to be 5 feet high ; but to my

distress, on my fourteenth birthday I was only 4 feet $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches, most of my growth being after I was sixteen, and now I am shorter than I was as a young man.'

I told him that it was the natural tendency of advancing years, and repeated a story I had heard from Lowell of how when Methuselah had attained his thousandth year his friends went to congratulate him. He said, "I am pretty well, thank you, but those d——d shoe-strings will go flapping in my face.'

On May 31, on my arrival at Guildford station, I heard of two successful dynamite explosions, in St. James's Square and in Scotland Yard, and an unsuccessful attempt at the foot of Nelson's monument. My son and daughter at St. James's heard the noise, and the housemaid, from an upper window, saw what she thought was a lightning flash. It is very curious how calmly people take these outrages as matters of course !

On June 11 we dined at Mr. Gladstone's : Frank and Lady Louisa Egerton, Lord Lorne, Mr. Bruce, Lady Sarah Spencer, Mr. Browning, and Mr. Tenniel.

Browning told us a curious story of Ruskin,

who, when a young man, was staying in an obscure valley among the hills of Switzerland. On asking why a certain field was left waste amidst the surrounding cultivation, he was told because it was haunted; 'for,' they said, 'all the children, but not we, can see an old woman sitting there under the tree.' He ridiculed the idea, but some time later he moved to a village some fifteen miles away, and lived with a family who had never left their native home; he asked if he might take their young daughter for a visit to the place he had left, and took a carriage for that purpose. As he approached the field, he said to the girl:

'Your eyes are younger than mine, tell me if you can see anyone.'

'Nobody,' she said, 'except an old woman sitting under the tree.'

'Well,' said he, 'what is she like?'

'I can only see her back,' she said, and then suddenly, with a voice of fear: 'Oh, she has turned now, and I can see her face with two holes where her eyes should be.'

Mr. Gladstone, talking of Froude's 'Carlyle,' said it was a splendid argument carried on

between Carlyle and Mrs. Carlyle as to whether she should marry him, with the balance of advantage on her side. Browning said she was an old friend of his, but had quarrelled with him on his return, after years of foreign travel, for putting down her kettle on the rug in her house.

Tenniel told us that the 'Punch' contributors met each week, on a Wednesday, to settle the cartoon for the following number; that he had Thursday to think it over, and Friday to draw it, after which it went to the engraver and was in type by Saturday; he saw no proof and had no opportunity of correcting his original sketch. I asked him why Lord Palmerston was always drawn in 'Punch' with a straw in his mouth, and he told me that, being a difficult likeness to catch, they were obliged to do something which the public should always recognise; for the same reason Mr. Bright was always drawn as wearing a broad-brimmed Quaker's hat and an eyeglass, neither of which he ever wore.

Mr. Gladstone said it was an odd thing that the average duration of Ministries was as long after as before the Reform Bill. He was within three weeks of equalling Palmerston, so if he

were turned out next week he would run him very close.

I went on to the Cosmopolitan, where I had a long talk with a distinguished Irishman, who was strongly opposed to an extension of the franchise as likely to lower Parliament and flood it with men like Ashmead Bartlett, instead of men like Henry Cowper, the former being only a platform speaker, and the latter a sensible man who could not speak.

Walter Northcote was dining one night at Rathbone's. A Radical, Sir Lyon Playfair, was there, and described the discovery of a new animal with a small part of its brains in its head, and the greater part in its tail. 'Like the Conservative Party,' said Rathbone, forgetting Northcote's presence; thus adding another to the many things 'one would rather not have said.'

In June there was an election at Brighton. Marriott, who had deserted his party, stood against Romer, and Godfrey Webb made this epigram:

Said Gladstone, passing Mr. Marriott:

'I sniff an odour of Iscariot.'

Said Marriott, 'He would rather sniff

Aroma fresh from Brighton cliff.'

On June 24, walking away from a house where we had been dining, Charles Clifford told me that he regretted not having congratulated our host on his daughter's marriage. I said: 'That is lucky, as it is broken off; I always think it wiser only to squeeze a man's hand, as that does not commit you; it may mean sympathy, congratulation, or condolence.'

He regretted that he had never kept a diary all the time he had been on confidential and intimate terms with Lord Palmerston; and we talked of Charles Greville's 'Memoirs,' just published, and both agreed that we had never seen any charm in Charles Greville personally, though he was probably more popular than his brother, Henry, who was very exclusive but very kind.

Clifford recollected Rogers well, who hated most people, but Henry Greville particularly. On coming down to an early breakfast once, at Panshanger, he found Henry Greville.

'Are you going to town?' he said.

'Yes,' said Henry Greville.

'*Must* you go to town?'

'Yes, I am afraid I must.'

'Then I shall stay,' snarled Rogers.

On June 25 we went to Hallam Tennyson's wedding in Henry the Eighth's Chapel, which was an imposing ceremony, from the historical associations of the place and the presence of Mr. Gladstone and many literary people, including the Poet Laureate.

In the evening I went to the Cosmopolitan with Spencer Lyttelton and Arthur Elliot, where we discussed the political line the Tories were taking by constant repetitions of votes of want of confidence on the Egyptian question.

Mr. Gladstone still kept up his Thursday breakfasts, and on June 26 I met there Henry Cowper, Dalhousie, Herbert Bismarck, Sir George Dasent, and others.

In talking of the Suez Canal, and Lord Palmerston's opposition to it, Mr. Gladstone said he thought Lesseps' name would hereafter be associated with Vasco de Gama and Columbus.

I heard a good story of how, at a Jewish feast, one of the guests saw a fellow-guest put a beautiful spoon up his sleeve. On returning thanks for the hospitality shown them, the man who saw this said he regretted he had nothing amusing to tell his host, but he could show him a

conjuring trick. Putting a valuable spoon in his sleeve, he said: 'Hey, presto! you will find the spoon in the sleeve of the gentleman sitting opposite'—where it was, and the speaker walked off with *his* spoon. This reminds me of another Jewish transaction: An old Jew, dying, said to his two sons, 'I don't like leaving this world as a pauper; pray put a couple of hundred pounds in my coffin'—which they promised to do. Before the funeral the one brother said: 'Have you done what my father wished?' 'Yes,' said the other, 'I have.' The first brother, being suspicious, opened the coffin and found a crossed cheque for 200*l.* in it!

The world is all agog about what the Lords will do on the Franchise Bill. People seem still to hope they will have sufficient wisdom to pass a measure sent up to them from the House of Commons *nem. con.*, but I have no such hope, and think on the whole that their throwing it out must lead to a reform much more important than an immediate extension of the franchise.

On July 4 we went to Belgrave Square to inquire after Lady Halifax, and found Lord

Halifax, who was exhausted by the heat, but still active. He had just returned from an attempted negotiation with the Duke of Richmond, as to the action of the House of Lords, and this was the last time I saw him. Lady Halifax died the following day, and he a year afterwards; thus we lost two friends who had been kind to us through all our married life.

On Sunday, July 5, we went to George Wolverton's place in Coombe Wood, where we saw Bertram Currie's bust of Mr. Gladstone, for which he wanted a suitable inscription. I tried Welby, who gave me the following, which Currie thought good but too long:

Pulchrum eminere est inter illustres viros,
 Consulere patriæ, parcere afflictis, ferâ
 Cæde abstinere, tempus atque iræ dare,
 Orbi quietem, sæculo pacem suo :
 Hæc summa virtus, petitur hâc Cælum viâ.

On the 6th the Lords threw out the Reform Bill by 59, Lord Rosebery making an excellent speech, and on the 10th there was a great meeting of the Liberal Party at the Foreign Office.

A few days later we dined at Lord Granville's, where the action of the Lords was the main topic

of conversation, but he told us that when Cete-wayo was here he asked what the Achilles statue was, and learnt that it was in honour of our great General, the Duke of Wellington. He said, turning to one of his chiefs : ‘ You see it was not so very long ago since they fought, as we do, without clothes.’

On July 18 the proposed compromise was defeated in the Lords by 50.

Miss Laura Tennant and her sister Margot came to Wanborough, and paid us a delightful visit, which, to me, was only marred by the news of the death of my old friend, Jervoise Smith, to whose sad funeral I went. Their visit was a long one, and each day added to their charm.

On August 6 I heard that Northbrook was to go to Egypt, for troubles there were thickening and Mr. Gladstone had persuaded him to proceed on a financial mission to Cairo, where, in co-operation with Evelyn Baring, he was to prepare a report for the Cabinet. It was a great demand to make on the First Lord of the Admiralty to enter into such a difficult field, which of course entailed his leaving naval affairs at home

to other hands; and the result was very prejudicial to Northbrook himself.

Some time after the fall of Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet it was discovered in a Committee of the House of Commons that the accounts at the Admiralty had been mismanaged, but Northbrook, with a loyalty which some people thought almost Quixotic, took the whole responsibility, which should really not have been his, on his own shoulders.

On the 12th I went to a country house built by P. Ralli, on ground which Lord Granville had once bought. Ralli reminded me of a dinner at his house when Hayward shocked us and Mr. Gladstone as to his views on a future state. Sir Andrew Clark was there. The following day Mr. Gladstone wrote twelve pages to Abraham Hayward, who, when he was dying, said: 'Tell Mr. Gladstone I do not die an unbeliever.'

Mr. J. S. Morgan asked me to go with him to America for a long visit, which, of course, I had to decline with many regrets.

On August 26 I heard of Lord Ampthill's death at Berlin; my friendship with him dated

back to the days when I lodged with my brother Richard in Queen Street, and he used to come and sing and play by the hour together. Two years ago he begged me to go with him to Carlsbad to get assured health. How delightful will his 'Memoirs' be one day, and his letters from the German headquarters in the Franco-German war, every page of which was full of interesting accounts of his long interviews with Bismarck!

In September we were at Wanborough, where Lord Granville paid us a visit. We had long talks on Gordon's extraordinary despatches, and heard that there was an idea afloat of Lord Wolseley's going out to replace him in Egypt.

One evening we had a long argument as to whether a Chancellor of the Exchequer who was prudent in his domestic affairs would necessarily be equally so in the affairs of the nation. William Pitt was extravagant, but a prudent financier; or, as Lord Rosebery puts it, he watched over the Treasury like Sully, and conducted his own affairs like Charles Surface.

CHAPTER XIX

1884—1885

Dinner at Brooks's—Mr. Gladstone on Lord Lytton—His Views on the Chiltern Hundreds and on Mr. Parnell—Sir William Harcourt on Disraeli's Reform Bill—Visits to Netherby and the Glen—Mr. Childers as Chancellor of the Exchequer—Sir Charles Trevelyan's Dispute with Mr. James Wilson—Introduction of the Franchise Bill—Conflict between the two Houses—Death of Mr. Fawcett—Labourers' Views of the Franchise—Lord Dufferin starts for India—Negotiations with Walter Northcote—Secret Meeting between Sir Stafford Northcote and Mr. Gladstone—Letter from Mr. Leonard Courtney—Death of Mr. Henley—His Views on Asylums—Conversation with Mr. Charles Villiers—His Views on Social Morality, Money-making, Protection—Huskisson's Remark on Peel—Croker's 'Memoirs'—Guizot's View of Croker—The Duke of Wellington's Policy—Mme. Jane Hading in the 'Maitre de Forges' and 'Frou-Frou'—Anecdote of Charles Mathews—Letter from Lord Aberdare—Walter Northcote's Report—News from the Soudan—Explosion in the House of Commons.

IN October everybody came up to London, and on the 7th Eddie Hamilton and I gave a little dinner at Brooks's, consisting of Mr. Gladstone, Lord Spencer, Sir William Harcourt,

Mr. Buckle, editor of the 'Times,' and Spencer Lyttelton.

The conversation at first was over *my* head at any rate—St. Thomas Aquinas and Roger Bacon, where the Scotch got their Sabbatarian views from, and when English pronunciation of Latin began, probably at the time of the Reformation, which was a bad time for English literature. Then about Lord and Lady Lytton, whose 'Memoirs' had just been published. Mr. Gladstone said he was a curious mixture of a Radical and a Protectionist; the latter prevailing drove him to the Tories. The general moral tone of the House of Commons he held to be much higher since the extension of the franchise, but offences of individual members more frequent.

Mr. Gladstone condemned the practice of allowing Chancellors of the Exchequer to give the Chiltern Hundreds to any Member of Parliament who applied for them. In Lord Aberdeen's Government he had tried to alter the practice, but had only so far succeeded as to have the words, 'in consideration of your shining virtues,' eliminated.

Mr. Gladstone said that he had a sneaking

liking for Parnell, and thought Home Rule for Ireland would be a matter for serious consideration before ten years were over. Lord Spencer told us of a curious speech of Davitt's in which he said separation was impossible. Sir William Harcourt amused us about Disraeli's Reform Bill of 1866. Delane had told him that months before its production Disraeli had actually given him a copy of a Bill enfranchising householders, and that he had accepted Hodgkinson's amendment to include them entirely on his own responsibility.

Some time after, on visiting Derby on Inland Revenue business, I came in as one of the audience for a good speech from Sir William Harcourt; and the following day went to Netherby, Sir Frederick and Lady Hermione Graham's, where I fished a great deal, with no success, though the river was full of fish.

While we were there Lady Hermione was sent for to her mother, the Duchess of Somerset, who was very ill. I recollect her as the Queen of Beauty in the Eglinton Tournament; she was very witty as well as beautiful. Once, holding a stall at a charity bazaar, she asked Lord

Suffolk, who was a short and fat man, to buy something ; he declined, saying he was not the prodigal son. ‘No,’ she replied, ‘you are much more like the fatted calf.’

My wife, my daughter Constance, and I went on October 18 to pay a visit to Lady Tennant at Glen, our first visit to a place where I was afterwards to spend so many happy days.

It is impossible to exaggerate the charm of the place, situated in a green valley with a small trout stream losing itself in the woods of birch, looking purple in autumn tints, while the house was full of lovely pictures collected by Sir Charles Tennant. The inhabitants it would be idle to describe and impertinent to praise ; but it is true to say that a happier or cleverer family never made a country house more delightful.

On November 1, after inspecting several Revenue offices and joining and again leaving my wife at Francis Grey’s at Morpeth, I returned to London ; and on the 4th had a long interview with the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

I used always to wonder at the satire of events that put Ward Hunt at the Exchequer in

succession to Disraeli ; but it is equally wonderful to think of Mr. Childers as successor to Mr. Gladstone, though, of course, from his experience at the Treasury, where he had been instrumental in passing the Exchequer and Audit Act, he had gained a great knowledge of figures, of which he was always a clear exponent. He was one of the few who thoroughly mastered finance accounts and the statistical abstracts, but beyond that he hardly appeared to possess the qualifications necessary for the office.

On reading Lord Malmesbury's amusing 'Memoirs,' his description of how he snubbed Lord Aberdeen reminded me of a quarrel which Mr. Gladstone had to adjust between Sir Charles Trevelyan and Mr. James Wilson, Joint Secretaries of the Treasury. When the interview was to have taken place, Wilson came and said it was all settled. He had spoken strongly to Trevelyan, who was thoroughly ashamed of himself, and had promised to behave better in future. Two minutes after Trevelyan came and said he had been obliged to speak very severely to Wilson, who had burst into tears !

In January 1884 we heard of the fighting in Egypt, and of the death of poor Burnaby at Abu Klea.

The Franchise Bill was introduced by Mr. Gladstone on February 29, the second reading being moved by Lord Hartington.

The Conservatives protested against the separation of Redistribution from the Franchise Question, Sir Stafford Northcote contending that it was impossible to decide on a Bill which was only a portion of a larger scheme, but what that larger scheme was nobody knew.

Mr. Gladstone said that a knowledge of the manner in which the new franchises would distribute themselves was almost essential to determining prudently the details of the plan of redistribution. It was only when the Franchise Bill and the Registration Bill had been passed that they would be in a position to deal justly and finally with the subject of redistribution.

Lord John Manners' amendment giving effect to the view of the Opposition was defeated, the Government obtaining a majority of

130, and the Bill being read a second time without a division.

During the progress of the Bill in Committee the differences between the Government and the Opposition became very much accentuated, and, speaking at Plymouth on June 5, Lord Salisbury said that, though he had no objection to seeing an extended franchise accorded, in his eyes the first essential of the whole question was redistribution, and, speaking only for himself, he strongly recommended the Lords to throw out the present Bill.

In moving the third reading of the Bill Mr. Gladstone referred to the ominous utterances out of doors threatening the rejection of the Bill. The attitude of the Government hitherto, he said, had been in Shakespeare's words :

Beware

Of entrance to a quarrel ; but, being in,
Bear't, that the opposed may beware of thee.

The Bill was read a third time on June 27 in the Commons, and introduced in the House of Lords on the same day. Lord Kimberley, on the second reading, said the Franchise Bill was not to come into operation till January 1886, and

that the Redistribution Bill (which he sketched) would be introduced next year if the Government remained in office.

Lord Cairns moved an amendment to the effect that the Lords would not assent to the second reading of the Bill unaccompanied by a Redistribution Bill.

The amendment was carried, and progress of the Bill thereby naturally stopped.

The conflict between the two Houses then assumed a very threatening aspect, but an amendment of Lord Cadogan's was eventually adopted that it would be desirable that Parliament should assemble in the autumn to consider the Representation of the People Bill already presented to Parliament, in conjunction with the Redistribution Bill which Her Majesty's Ministers had undertaken to present to Parliament.

With this the question of the Franchise virtually closed for the Session, which was prorogued on August 14.

In the Winter Session a Franchise Bill (precisely identical with the previous Bill) was introduced and carried through various stages

in the House of Commons, and introduced in the House of Lords on November 13.

The Lords wished the Franchise and Redistribution Bills to be considered together.

One evening I called on Mr. Gladstone, who thought that a creation of peers would be the necessary solution of the crisis. I still believed in compromise. He had just come from a visit to Lord Sherbrooke, who had lost his wife and was complaining of his bitter solitude; poor man, after having filled so large a space in society and politics, he felt his isolation all the more keenly.

On November 6 Fawcett died. When his eyes were shot out he said: 'I have such faith in the recuperative power of Nature that I will abate no jot of my ambitions and endeavours,' and no man ever kept his resolution more gallantly or determinedly.

On the 8th we went to Wanborough, and heard two stories of the labourers' view of the franchise. Some one said to a working man: 'I suppose you do not care for the vote?' 'Yes, I do,' said he; 'I may sometimes get a hare now,' which was pathetic.

Another said: 'They say I sha'n't know what to do with a vote now I've got it; sha'n't I? I never saw a glass of sherry wine, but if I got it I should know what to do with it,' suiting the action to the word.

On November 11 the Franchise Bill was read a third time in the House of Commons and Brooks's was crowded, all prospects of compromise appearing to be over, Lord John Manners having made a strong speech.

The next day I said 'good-bye' to Dufferin, who was starting for India; he begged me to continue my weekly letters, such as I had written to Northbrook and Lady Ripon, to Lady Dufferin when in India, and thus I gained for myself many interesting letters from her during Dufferin's viceroyalty.

On November 13 I talked at Somerset House to Walter Northcote about a compromise. His idea was that after the second reading of the Franchise Bill in the House of Lords the Government should lay their Redistribution Bill on the table, and that the Franchise Bill should then be allowed to pass.

I said I believed, as far as I could guess, that

the Government would close with such an offer, and that if I had his father's authority I would propose it. He accordingly, after seeing him, gave me this authority :

‘ Sir Stafford Northcote believes if the Government introduced a Redistribution Bill things would go right. This is only his personal opinion.

‘ W. S. N.’

I went to see Lord Granville, who, immediately on hearing Sir Stafford Northcote's opinion, went across with me and consulted Mr. Gladstone.

A Cabinet was hastily summoned, and Lord Granville desired me to acquaint Sir Stafford that Mr. Gladstone would like an hour or so to consider so important a communication, and that in the meantime both he and Mr. Gladstone thought it would conduce to a settlement if, on the grounds of old private friendship, Sir Stafford would meet Mr. Gladstone for a short conversation, either at our house or Lord Granville's, or elsewhere.

At five o'clock I went with Walter Northcote

to the House of Commons, and after a consultation with Sir Stafford Northcote in his private room, Lord Granville and Mr. Gladstone arranged for a secret meeting at our house at St. James's. In the meantime Walter Northcote put his ideas thus :

‘The Bill will be read a second time on Monday, November 17. If when the second reading is over on that same evening Lord Granville says he will ask the House to go into Committee on that day week, *i.e.* Monday, the 24th, and if in the other House Mr. Gladstone gives notice either on that same Monday or else on the next day (Tuesday, the 18th) that he will on Thursday, the 20th, or Friday, the 21st, introduce the Redistribution Bill, would not everything be settled ?

‘If this proposal were made by the Government, could the other side by any possibility be anything but satisfied, and also committed to the passing of the Franchise Bill ? They would have the Government Redistribution Bill in its formal shape before them, and could no longer oppose the passing the Franchise Bill, at any rate on the grounds they have hitherto taken up.’

On November 13 the Gladstones, Mr. Goschen, the Trevellyans, Frank Baring, and Mrs. Beerbohm Tree were dining with us, and the anxiety was whether they would have departed in time ; but at 10.45 all but Mrs. Beerbohm Tree had gone ; I left her with my wife, and sent word to Sir Stafford Northcote that the coast was clear, and then myself let him in. The interview lasted till nearly ten minutes to twelve. Sir Stafford Northcote, on leaving, was not very hopeful, but was glad negotiations had begun.

All this is described fully in 'Lord Iddesleigh's Life :'

'On November 13 my eldest son came to see me, and gave me to understand that Algernon West and he had been speculating about my views of the position. I said to him what I had been saying all along to Lord Tollemache, to Mr. Peel and others, by some of whom it must have been communicated to the Ministers, that if the Government would introduce the Redistribution Bill all would go right. He asked me whether this might be communicated to Mr. Gladstone as my personal opinion. I said, "Yes." He then went away ; but in the afternoon he

came down to the House of Commons and told me that, as soon as West had mentioned this to Lord Granville, he had gone over to see Mr. Gladstone, and then desired West to acquaint me that Mr. Gladstone would like an hour or two to consider so important a communication, and in the meantime Lord Granville and Mr. Gladstone would think it most desirable if, on the grounds of old private friendship, I would meet Mr. Gladstone for a short conversation, either at West's house or Lord Granville's, or elsewhere. I said I must take a little time to consider this request, and I went into the House of Lords and consulted Salisbury. We agreed that I had better hear what Mr. Gladstone had to say. I told Walter this, who went away, and came back with a message that Mr. Gladstone is nervous about meeting in the daytime, as so many people watch him.

‘He dines to-night with West in St. James's Palace; could I meet him there about eleven o'clock, when the guests will have gone? I went accordingly at eleven o'clock, and was let in by West. I found Gladstone alone, and remained with him about half an hour.

‘The result of this and other negotiations was the announcement of the Government’s willingness to communicate with the leaders of the Opposition on the details of the Redistribution Bill.

‘The proposed conference was accepted, and comparative peace was restored.’¹

On the 14th I saw Mr. Gladstone, who was fairly hopeful; but on Sunday, the 16th, he had given up all hope that the negotiations would be successful.

On the 17th Walter Northcote (who was also disheartened), wrote to me the following letter :

Worlingham Hall, Beccles : Monday, November 17, 1884.

‘My dear West,—I am awfully sorry, but in truth more sorry than surprised. I feel matters have gone beyond us, and that our efforts have been in vain in the past, and must be so in the future. I have heard nothing from my side, so can only conclude that they don’t want me, even as they said they should not want me. I therefore saw no use in coming up.

¹ *Life of Lord Iddesleigh*, ii. 207.

‘The only possible suggestion that occurs to me is that you should once more speak to Lord G. and ask him if you can convey any messages. I suppose what has happened is that we have answered you unsatisfactorily. But you have answered us again. I suppose we should have expected you to do so, and not wanted to stop all negotiations.

‘You know my side is prepared to receive you, but I fear it is very hopeless, at any rate at the present moment. The general meeting to-morrow *might* prove beneficial, but it is a very poor chance.

‘Yours ever,

‘WALTER NORTHCOTE.’

On the day he wrote I went to the House of Commons and heard Mr. Gladstone say ‘that on receiving adequate assurance that the Franchise Bill would be passed in the course of that Session the Government would be willing to make the main provisions of their Redistribution Bill the subject of friendly communication, and would undertake to move its second reading simultaneously with the Committee or some

subsequent stage of the Franchise Bill in the Lords.'

Our plot to bring about the negotiations had met with complete success. The Redistribution Bill duly reached the House of Lords and was read a third time, and eventually became law, but not until the Government which had introduced it had ceased to exist.

Early in December Mr. Courtney, I regretted to hear, was about to send in his resignation as Secretary to the Treasury, because his plan of Minority representation was not adopted; I urged him to remain, but, as the following letter shows, in vain:

15 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W. : December 8, 1884.

'My dear West,—I would have acknowledged your kind letter before, but I have been, as you may suppose, extremely busy, and indeed I remain so.

'I am very sorry to sever my official connection with the Treasury; yet I think I may pledge myself to continue faithful to my interest in it. If a voice is wanted in the House I will not be silent.

‘Assuredly my work was made lighter and easier by your co-operation.

‘Very faithfully yours,

‘LEONARD COURTNEY.’

On December 10 old Mr. Henley died, almost unnoticed ; he had been in Lord Derby's Government, when he resigned with Lord Salisbury.

Talking of asylums for the insane, Mr. Henley once said he thought a good many people ought to be locked up who were walking about loose—drinkers and gamblers for instance—indeed, he thought everybody almost ought to be ; the only difficulty that presented itself to his mind was who was to keep the key.

On January 3, 1885, I came up from Wanborough, after a very happy Christmas, and dined at Brooks's, where I met in the smoking-room Charles Villiers, quite ready to talk on all subjects with extraordinary vivacity. He discoursed on the social morality of the day, as compared with that which existed in the days of his youth. One thing, he said, had certainly changed, which was that in his time it was the

ambition of youths to be considered *roués* and *mauvais sujets*, and to conceal the work they were engaged in; whereas now those who were at work were proud of it, and those who were not, pretended to be busy; and this kept them out of mischief, to some extent, with idle women. But what had been gained in one direction was lost in another, inasmuch as speculation and love of money-making had grown. The masterpiece of the Queen's reign was her message to Mrs. Garfield¹ when her husband was shot, for the Americans are truly enamoured of equality.

Thus Blaine, the defeated candidate for the Presidency, said they would prefer a mediocrity to a distinguished man, and any mark of superiority to others would be prejudicial to his election.

Villiers regretted in every way Lowell's departure as American Minister. I asked him if he thought there would ever be any attempt to return to Protection in this country. He thought not, and referred me to a letter from Mr. Pell, a Tory member, who had publicly

¹ ' Words cannot express the deep sympathy I feel with you at this terrible moment. May God support and comfort you as He alone can ! '

stated that any such hope would be foolishness. He thought nothing could be made of a cry for Protection till its advocates could point to a Protectionist country more prosperous than we were as Free Traders.

He disbelieved the extent to which the depression in trade was alleged to have gone. A manufacturing constituent of his said that business was not slack, but that profits were small.

I told him that next year's income tax assessments for Liverpool showed an increase, and that Peel's income tax in 1841 brought in for each penny 700,000*l.*, while it was now estimated to bring in over 2,000,000*l.*

He told me that in 1828 he was present at a meeting when Huskisson said that Peel was sound on Free Trade, but he did not know which way he would go on Catholic Emancipation.

I wrote this down at the time, and thought it so strange that I repeated it to Mr. Gladstone, Lord Granville, Lord Hampden, and George Peel, his grandson, who told me that he was not surprised, for he knew from papers he had seen that Sir Robert had said about that time that from no one had he received such cordial

support in the matter of Free Trade as from Huskisson.

Mr. Villiers then began to discuss Croker's 'Memoirs.' He could only account for his great influence by the fact that he was a clever writer, lived with clever writers, and pushed himself into the society of clever men. My wife sent me a day or two afterwards Guizot's view of him, saying :

'You have read Croker's view of Guizot; here is Guizot's view of Croker :

"Amongst all the champions of the old English Toryism with whom I came in contact, it was from an individual entirely disconnected with the high old aristocracy and the Court—a literary man in the third rank of political importance—Mr. John Wilson Croker, that I derived the most complete and comprehensive knowledge of this party. He had been for many years a member of the House of Commons, and Secretary to the Admiralty, but after the passing of the Reform Bill, which he had energetically opposed, he left Parliament and office, and entirely devoted himself to political and literary criticism. Into this avocation he carried all the

maxims, traditions, and passions of a servant of the Cabinet of Lord Liverpool and Lord Castlereagh. Ever an ardent adversary . . . of the Whigs, even while admitting the necessity of certain reforms, he was a man of unusual information, of a sagacious, inquiring, vigorous, and judicious mind; but an incarnation of party spirit, intractable, and resolved to defend everything rather than suffer the slightest encroachment on the general system to which he belonged.” ’

The Duke of Wellington’s policy was embodied, Charles Villiers went on to say, in the one phrase, ‘How is the Queen’s Government to be carried on?’

Our colonial policy would get us into a mess unless Mr. Gladstone himself tackled it; it should now be *laissez faire* since we had got Free Trade. Before that, our policy was intelligible, but not so now when we gained no special privileges from the Colonies—within the bounds of a great and large generosity we should leave them free.

At half-past one o’clock this man of another age thought it time to go home!

After a day or two at Wanborough we dined at Frederick Leveson-Gower's, and met Lord and Lady Granville.

Lord Granville said, on the whole, he considered the most agreeable man he had ever met was Lord Alvanley.

After dinner we all went to the Cosmopolitan Club, which I had persuaded Lord Granville to join, and heard Lord Wolseley say that General Gordon had written, saying it would not do to leave Berber in our rear, which was alarming.

The next day I met Lord Hampden at breakfast at Brooks's, where we discussed Croker's 'Memoirs' and Mr. Gladstone's probable retirement, and hopes that he would remain. Dilke or Chamberlain, said Lord Hampden, would either do later for leaders.

In the evening I went with Mrs. Beerbohm Tree to see Jane Hading in the 'Maître de Forges.' I liked and admired her much, but for me, at least, she was rather indistinct in her moments of passion. A day or two later we saw her act 'Frou Frou,' when everybody was in tears, and 'you could have borrowed a fiver from any one of them,' as Artemus Ward said.

A propos of actors, let me relate the confession of Charles Mathews that he was only once bested in a repartee. Some young bloods had been disturbing the theatre where he was acting by loud conversation, remarks, and laughter; they were in the stage box, and, noisily rising, began to make preparations for their departure. Charles Mathews said: 'The play is not over, gentlemen, there is another act.' 'That is why we are going,' said one of them.

The next day I had a nice letter from Lord Aberdare on his getting a G.C.B., in which he quoted Cicero as telling us that consideration is the veteran's compensation for the loss of the pleasures of youth and vigorous manhood, and a very poor compensation it is.

I suggested about this time to Walter Northcote, who was the Deputy-Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, that he should undertake the preparation and editing of the Annual Report of the Department and its work, both for the use it would be to the public as well as himself, for though very able he was constitutionally indolent.

He adopted the suggestion, and worked at it

con amore, making the Report one altogether of a special nature, giving general information as to the taxes under the management of the Board.

On January 21 I was sitting with Mrs. Stanley Clarke, when Sir Charles Brownlow and Colonel Harman came in with the news of General Stewart's victory in the Soudan over 10,000 of the Mahdi's troops, but with heavy loss on our part ; I ascertained that my nephew, Colin Keppel, was safe, and telegraphed to Harry Keppel, who wrote to me his thanks and joy.

On Saturday, January 24, I was coming out of the Treasury, when I met Count Münster, the German Ambassador, who told me of the explosion in the House of Commons, which I had, oddly enough, not heard in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's room, where I had been at the time. I went at once with him to the Houses of Parliament, meeting the First and Second Commissioners of Police at the gate. We found all the windows of Westminster Hall blown out, and a hole at the top of the crypt at the bottom of the steps of the great hall, and on going through the main lobby into

the House, we found the gallery, under which I had so often sat on the Government side of the House, blown to pieces and the beams and glass scattered in every direction. 'The dust of ages,' as Sir William Harcourt said, filled the atmosphere.

Excellent news of General Stewart having reached the Nile, came the following day, and eclipsed in interest for the time being the explosion in the House of Commons.

Colin Keppel had gone on with Sir Charles Wilson in Gordon's steamers to Khartoum.

CHAPTER XX

1885

Sir Charles Brownlow on the Afghan Business and Lord Lytton—Lord Granville on the Situation—News of the Fall of Khartoum—Colin Keppel's Hereditary Pluck—Lord Rosebery and Mr. Shaw-Lefevre join the Cabinet—Death of General Earle—Mr. Gladstone's Depression—Small Government Majority—Mr. Gladstone on Old Testament Characters—On Cromwell and Buonaparte—Mr. Gladstone's Bet about Lord Overstone's Probate—Mr. Childers' Budget—General Gordon's Estimate of Lord Granville, Lord Hartington, and Sir Charles Dilke—Budget Difficulties—Negotiations with the Great Brewers—Marriage of Miss Laura Tennant—Defeat of the Government on the Second Reading of the Budget Bill—Letter from Sir Stafford Northcote on the Inland Revenue Report—Interview with Sir Michael Hicks-Beach—Sir Peter Lumsden—Letter from Mr. Gladstone on the Inland Revenue Report—His Tribute to the Board—Mr. Gladstone's Versatility—His Knowledge of Music—Reminiscences of Jenny Lind—Cardinal Manning on Mr. Gladstone's Retirement—Commission on Trade Depression—Letters from Lord Iddesleigh and Lord St. Cyres—Visit to Copt Hall—Election Talk at the Cosmopolitan—Dinner at Mr. Armitstead's—Election Returns—Dinner at Brooks's—Henry James's Stories of Lord Randolph—Conversation with Charles Villiers—His Recollections of Bygone Celebrities.

ON February 1 I dined with Sir John Rose, meeting Lord Cathcart and Sir Charles Brownlow,

a very distinguished Indian officer, who told us much to prove that the Afghan business, which ended so disastrously, was wholly Lord Lytton's doing, and was perfectly unjustifiable.

On the 3rd Lord Granville dined with us ; but he was low and tired. He doubted the possibility of Mr. Gladstone's retirement at the end of the Parliament. He would not be surprised if the country insisted on his forming a new Government after the next election ; in that case, he hoped he would take a peerage, and so lessen his labours.

In the middle of the next night my son Horace woke us up with the sad news he had heard from Reggie Brett, that Khartoum had fallen.

On February 11 I heard from Edward Ponsonby, saying my son Horace was chosen to act as assistant secretary to the Speaker, and he got a nice letter from Sir Erskine May on his appointment.

Every day the Egyptian news seemed getting worse and worse. Three battalions of Guards were ordered out under Sir Reginald Gipps,

whom I well recollect going out as a subaltern to the Crimea.

We saw in the papers that Colin Keppel, who had evidently inherited his father's dash, was mentioned in despatches as pluckily cutting out a boat from under an Arab battery, in the rescue of Sir Charles Wilson.

There was a rumour of Gordon's death, but I met Mr. Gladstone looking ill and worn, who told me that no official news had been received of it.

Lord Rosebery was appointed to the Cabinet, holding the offices of Lord Privy Seal and Chief Commissioner of Works, and George Shaw-Lefevre, who had succeeded Mr. Fawcett as Postmaster-General, was admitted into the Cabinet at the same time.

It was impossible not to admire Lord Rosebery for joining a ship so deep in the trough of the sea.

We heard of General Earle's victory and death on the Nile. What a wretched, miserable, unnecessary business all this is !

On the 21st Mr. Gladstone proposed himself for dinner, but was dejected and low, and we

carefully avoided the subjects that were depressing him ; so to cheer him I talked of nothing but finance, and the probate duty on Lord Ashburnham's library, for which we had to fight, and the question of taxes on American securities.

On the 27th the Government had a majority of only 14, Mr. Goschen and Mr. Forster voting with the Conservatives ; the latter indulging in a very bitter attack on his old colleagues.

It was in this month that my wife and I heard a beautiful sermon at the Chapel Royal from the Bishop of Derry (Alexander). The subject was the question : ' Is life worth living ? ' and he placed it in the loftiest lights. It was full of pathos and poetry, and we appreciated it very much. But, after all, there is something in what the witty Frenchman said : ' C'est une question de foi(e). '

On April 23 my wife and daughter were having luncheon with Lord Northbrook and Lady Emma Baring at the Admiralty, when there was an explosion in the room of a clerk named Swainson, who had been a colleague of mine there in old days. We dined there in the evening, and heard that it was sup-

posed to have been the work of a messenger, but I do not think anything was ever proved.

I met Mr. Gladstone at dinner at the Reform Club, when he bet Mr. Knowles, of the 'Nineteenth Century,' who was our host, a pound that Lord Overstone's probate would be over 4,000,000*l.*; but it was not, and Knowles won his bet. Lord Overstone had evidently given a great deal of his personalty away before his death.

Mr. Gladstone, who was in one of his classical moods, compared Lucretius to Virgil, though he admitted that Lucretius could not have written the Second Eclogue.

I asked him if what I had heard from Bobsy Meade was true, that he had said there was no really first-class character in the Old Testament. He denied it, but recollected his conversation with Arthur Mills on the subject. What he had done was to compare the Old Testament with the Greek heroes. Moses' was, undoubtedly, a very fine character; Joseph's very beautiful. I suggested Jeremiah, but he said the Greeks would not have tolerated the horrors and cruelties recorded in the Old Testament. Solomon was very great. When the chapter dealing with the

number of his wives and concubines was being read at a mothers' meeting at Hawarden, an old woman exclaimed: 'Lor, what privileges them ancient Christians enjoyed!'

Mr. Gladstone compared Hallam, in his copious use of notes, with Macaulay, who put everything into beautiful language, and embodied all his information in it.

Dante, said he, was once supposed to have visited Oxford. He would have liked to see Oliver Cromwell and Buonaparte pitted against each other. He evidently did not love Oliver Cromwell, thinking him a great man with no distinct love of religious liberty; but then, of course, the times he lived in must not be forgotten. Cromwell might lie with a purpose, as Elizabeth did, but Charles I. was a terrible liar.

On April 30 came on Mr. Childers' Budget. It was generally well received, and I dined at a banquet which Welby annually gave on such occasions to the Governor of the Bank of England, and other financial authorities, at the Garrick Club.

On May 6 we dined at the Admiralty, and the conversation turned chiefly on Gordon.

It was said that Gordon, after his interview with the Committee of the Cabinet who sent him to the Soudan, said he liked Granville and Hartington, and would like to give each of them a copy of the Bible, but he did not like Sir Charles Dilke, who talked *sotto voce* all the time of the conference.

One day Gordon was having luncheon with Lady Ripon in Carlton Gardens; Lord Cowper was there, and on Gordon's departure he asked who that little man was, and was much disappointed on hearing that it was Gordon, with whom he had not had any conversation. He told his brother Henry of this, who determined he would not lose such an opportunity, so went the next day to luncheon with the Ripons, and hung on the lips of a man who was there. After luncheon he said how glad he had been to have met Gordon: 'Oh, no,' said Lady Ripon, 'that is the doctor who is going out to India with us.'

All this time was occupied in Budget negotiations, mainly with the great brewers.

On the 18th Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone dined with us, and after a talk I returned to the House of Commons with him. The opposition to the

Budget was now daily increasing, and in a conversation with Mr. Gladstone I offered to open negotiations with the great brewers. Mr. Childers was ill, and so Mr. Gladstone wrote my proposals to him, and he approved of them.

Immediately on hearing this I set to work and drew up a memorandum, which I produced to Sir Arthur Bass, and Messrs. Whitbread, Allsopp, Grindling and Gretton, Watney and Bonsor agreeing, this tided over the difficulty of the increased beer duty.

On the 22nd we attended our dear friend Miss Laura Tennant's marriage with Alfred Lyttelton in Westminster Abbey.

On June 8 began the second reading of the Budget Bill. I insisted upon Watney's speaking, as he had promised to do, in favour of the increased beer duty, but all to no purpose, Richard Grosvenor having told me he had no majority. Even Mr. Gladstone's admirable speech could not redeem it. The Government were beaten by 12.¹

¹ Extract from Lord Iddesleigh's Journal, June 8:—'On the defeat of the Government, Walter left the House with Algernon West, and said something about this being a curious end of Gladstone's career.' West said: 'Ah, this can't be the end now—you will see him come out more energetic than ever.'

The Cabinet sat the next day, and I was asked to consult Sir Erskine May on their behalf, as to the effect of a House of Commons' resolution as bearing upon the increased excise duties on spirits. He said a resolution was an honourable engagement and should not be cancelled. I told this to Childers, who said that the Cabinet had already decided to act in a contrary direction, and give up the extra 2s. on spirits.

We were asked to dine once more, for the last time, in Downing Street; but alas! were engaged to dine elsewhere.

On June 11 I tried hard to get the Chancellor of the Exchequer to announce some definite arrangement as to the duty to be collected on spirits, but, finding it impossible, I got my colleague, Walter Northcote, to go and see his father and settle it with him—which he did.

On that day we dined at George Trevelyan's and I had some bets with him and Mundella as to the composition of the new Cabinet, which I won.

Our Inland Revenue Report was now completed, and I sent copies of it to Sir S. North-

cote and Mr. Gladstone, and it is pleasant to think that the report which I made Walter Northcote undertake was wonderfully well done, and has served as the standard work of reference on all Revenue subjects till this day.

June 19, 1885.

‘ My dear Sir Stafford Northcote,—I have for some time been looking forward to the moment when I might send you a copy of the Report, which will shortly be presented to Parliament, of the Revenue under our charge, and when I might tell you that it is almost entirely the work of your son; the only credit I wish to take to myself in the matter is the suggestion that he should undertake it. I shall be much disappointed if you do not think that he has given effect to that suggestion in a manner that will do credit to us, to him, and if I may say so, to the training he has received from you.

‘ You will recollect the text-book of our Department which has always been referred to as the Thirteenth Report. The new Report, which I now send you in proof, will contain all that is worth retaining of the old one, and will

bring up the history of the Department to the last moment.

‘May I venture to take this opportunity of expressing my sincere and deep regret, which will be shared by the whole Civil Service, at your departure from the House of Commons, which will make it impossible for you ever again personally to undertake the direction of the finances of the country ; and at the same time to say on public as well as private grounds how I rejoice that, as First Lord of the Treasury, you will still exercise a control over us, and the duties which it will be our pleasure loyally to perform under your guidance.

‘I have not the pleasure of knowing Sir M. Hicks-Beach, but if you think I might with propriety send him a proof copy of the Report I would do so.

‘ALGERNON WEST.’

Sir Stafford’s letter of acknowledgment ran as follows :

30 St. James’s Place, S.W. : June 20, 1885.

‘My dear Mr. West,—Let me thank you sincerely for your kind letter, and for what you

are good enough to say about Walter, and about myself.

‘I have not had time to do more than take a hasty glance at the Report, but I am very much pleased to hear that you think it well done. Your steady kindness has been of great advantage to my son, and I can assure you that he repays it by warm attachment to you.

‘As for myself, I am in danger of being killed by kindness. I hope that, whatever happens, I may retain the connection with the Treasury which I value so much, both on account of the character of the work and of the association with such men as those who work the central and the auxiliary departments.

‘I have mentioned the Report to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, who would be very much obliged if you would send him a proof at the Carlton.

‘If our Ministry comes into working existence I hope to introduce you to him without delay.

‘Yours faithfully,

‘STAFFORD NORTHCOTE.’

Algernon West, Esq., C.B.

On June 24 we went for the last time to the Admiralty under the rule of Northbrook.

Among the final arrangements of the dying Government, Sir Ralph Lingen, the Secretary to the Treasury, became a peer, and of course Welby succeeded him, at which I was much rejoiced.

On the 26th I had my first interview with the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, and discussed the financial position.

On July 8 I dined at the Goldsmiths' Hall, and sat next to Sir Peter Lumsden, who had just returned from India. He told me that he dreaded the advent of September, as that was the month for Russian movements. It was impossible for us to advance beyond Candahar, but by the Black Sea and Taganrog we might sow dissension among the Turcomans.

He appeared to me a real Russophobist.

On the 10th I received a letter from Mr. Gladstone, most flattering to my Board, to which I at once replied; and his letter, which I here reproduce, along with my own reply, now stands

at the beginning of the Twenty-eighth Report of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue:

1 Richmond Terrace: July 8, 1885.

‘My dear West,—This is the first day on which I have been able to secure a quiet hour for the examination of the Twenty-eighth Report of your Board, from which I learn, without surprise, how much we are indebted to your colleague, who was Mr. Northcote.

‘It appears to be a most careful and most valuable work.

‘The only point of mere detail which raised a question in my mind was the reference on p. 74 to the Act of 1853. It is there said that the rate of income tax was fixed at 5*d.* for seven years. I rather think this is not accurate.

‘It was hardly worth while to refer to this small point. Speaking more at large, this document reminds me that, during the whole period of my official connection with the finance of this country, I have had no greater pleasure than in my communications with the Department of Inland Revenue. I have always found it a model, in its heads and principal officers, of

enlightened ability and untiring zeal. So it was when I began to know it intimately thirty-three years ago, and so I have found it down to the time when I resigned the charge of finance, and I rejoice now in closing the door of office behind me to have a new proof through your kindness that it is likely to be in the future what it has been in the past.

‘Believe me, always sincerely yours,

‘W. E. GLADSTONE.’

Algernon E. West, Esq.

Board of Inland Revenue : July 10, 1885.

‘My dear Mr. Gladstone,—I cannot find words to thank you on this Board’s behalf and my own for the generous words of approval and encouragement which your letter of the 8th inst. conveyed to us.

‘No one in this Department will ever forget them, and they will serve as a noble incentive to us all to strive vigorously and honestly to keep this Department as it was handed over to us, worthy of the high commendation that you have given it.

‘We are grateful to you for not objecting to the publication of your letter, and we trust that

the good effect it will have in the whole of our Inland Revenue service will far outweigh any idea that we publish it from motives of personal vanity.

‘ALGERNON WEST.’

Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P.

On July 16 was the second reading of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach's Budget Bill — which from the necessities of the case was very simple and consequently without much interest.

Arthur Russell and Bingham Mildmay dined with us to meet Mr. Gladstone, who was in great force. The talk at dinner was of books; he praised Jesse's life of Beau Brummell as a moral book with a lesson. He had read George Eliot's life and saturated himself with no less than five reviews of it.

Arthur Russell said there were only seventeen Positivists in England; Mr. Gladstone said, at any rate, on one point he agreed with them — that marriage was absolutely indissoluble. After dinner he talked much on his favourite subject, the triumph of my Department. One man's exemption, he said, was another man's taxation.

Dining another night at our house he met Andrew Hichens, no mean musician, who knew thoroughly all the technical expressions connected with the art. Mr. Gladstone, to his astonishment, talked of fugues and octaves, crotchets and minims with entire ease. He said that he had heard a bass voice at St. Andrew's which reminded him of Lablache. He disapproved of the new, or rather return to the old notation of the Old Hundredth Psalm, in which crotchets had been substituted for minims.

At a great function at Edinburgh, so he told us, where 10,000 voices were singing the Hundredth Psalm with the usual rhythm, the band adopted the modern rendering with disastrous results.

He told Mrs. Hichens that many years ago, when Jenny Lind was in her glory, there were some American singers at his house. To amuse them he pointed out all the celebrities—Emperor of Russia, Princes, and Princesses, and they were very indifferent, but when he showed them Jenny Lind they threw up their hands with delight.

On August 12, the anniversary of our happy

wedding-day, I went up to town in the carriage with Cardinal Manning, who regretted that his old friend Gladstone had not sooner retired. He thought the Tories would gain some seats at the next election, but lose more at the succeeding one, but either party must provide building sites for the working men, with whom the earth hunger was as keen as in Ireland. He was in favour of my idea of taking land for taxes, and reselling it.

On September 1 my sailor son, Gilbert, was appointed to the 'Polyphemus,' the great ramming ship, which we went to see at Portsmouth. The cabins were all below the water-line, and were supplied with air by pumps.

On Saturday, October 3, my son Reggie came with his wife, and I was enjoying our holiday when I heard from Lord Iddesleigh, asking me to appear as a witness before his Commission on Trade Depression, which I tried to prove did not exist if you took England as a whole. I was self-satisfied with my evidence, and later found that the Commission was satisfied also, as appears from the second of the two letters which I here subjoin :

10 Downing Street, Whitehall: October 9, 1885.

‘My dear Mr. West,—I am anxious if possible to have the advantage of your evidence before the Trade Commission next week. I don’t like disturbing your holiday; but we mean to try to get through our official witnesses on Thursday and Friday, and shall then adjourn for a fortnight before taking up the trade witnesses.

‘Would Friday suit you?’

‘I remain, yours faithfully,

‘IDDESLEIGH.’

Algernon E. West, Esq., C.B.

Board Room, Inland Revenue, Somerset House :
October 19, 1885.

‘My dear West,—My father was very decidedly pleased with your evidence, which he thought was very well given, as well as interesting in itself. He also said you gave it cheerfully, and rather as if you liked doing so, which of course made it much more agreeable all round; so I think you may legitimately congratulate yourself. Robinson will have told you how delighted Elliott was.

‘Yours ever,

‘ST. CYRES.’

‘P.S.—I hear we are to win 40 seats in

England by the Parnellite vote. At present in England and Wales there are about 265 Liberals and 211 Conservatives. Total, 476.

‘ The total will be raised from 476 to 495. If you get 65 out of 72 seats in Scotland, and 3 out of 103 in Ireland, which is all we give you there, I understand, you will want 268 English seats to give a majority of 2, as thus :

‘ England and Wales : Liberals, 268 ; Conservatives, 227 = 495. Scotland : Liberals, 65 ; Conservatives, 7 = 72. Ireland : Liberals, 3 ; Conservatives, 15 ; Parnellites, 85. Liberals, 336 ; Conservatives, 334. Total Parliament, 670.

‘ St. C.’

On the 6th October my wife and daughter and I paid a visit to Walter Burns, the son-in-law of my old friend, Mr. Julius Morgan, at Copt Hall, a curious old place in Epping Forest, belonging formerly to the Conyers. Burns was most agreeable and had an extraordinarily original way of expressing himself. Having been to a terribly crowded party, he told us that if St. Paul had been there he would have been

obliged to hang up his halo outside, as there was no room for it inside.

Mr. Pennington (an artist), Mr. Poste (a musician), and M. Archdeacon (a Frenchman), made up our party.

We returned on the 10th, and on the 11th October I went to the Cosmopolitan, where I had a long election talk with Herschell, who thought Edward Grey would beat Lord Percy, and that Sir M. Ridley and William Lowther would be beaten in Northumberland. Hal. Howard was doubtful but hopeful. Fair Trade and Church were doing harm; this majority would be smaller. Harry Sturgis would beat C. Hambro in Dorset, but Wolverton said 'No' to the last.

Sir William Harcourt said to Horace that he thought they would get forty majority over Tories and Irish together. St. Cyres, who is generally very accurate, puts the Liberal majority at twenty-five. Sir Charles Tennant was gloomy about seats in Glasgow, but behold, we know not anything, and nobody knows anything!

It was in this month that we had had a farewell tea with Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton, to say

‘good-bye’ to Lady Ribblesdale, who was off to Gibraltar. Spencer Lyttelton came in fresh from Midlothian, describing Mr. Gladstone as full of vigour and confidence, and sure of a large majority.

I spent the evening at Brooks’s with Sandhurst, Henry Calcraft, and others, receiving news from the boroughs as to how the elections were going.

Birmingham had returned a solid seven.

Arthur Hayter was beaten, which I regretted, as Parliament was the air he breathed to him. Dilke got in by a small majority. My brother Henry in at head of poll for Ipswich. Childers and George Lefevre were both beaten.

Mr. Gladstone was returned by 4,000 majority, Edward Grey beating Lord Percy by 1,200.

On the 29th I dined with Mr. Armitstead, Mr. Gladstone’s loyal follower and friend, whose devotion was only equalled by his hospitality. Herbert Gladstone, Mr. Cohen, and Frank Hill, of the ‘Daily News,’ were there, and I heard some election stories, probably old :

A man tried to sell some kittens with blue

Tory ribbons on, and failed; the next day he tried to sell them with yellow Liberal ribbons on. 'Why,' said some one, 'they were Tories yesterday!' 'Yes,' he said, 'but their eyes are opened since then, and they have become Liberals.'

'Will you vote for me?' said a canvassing candidate. 'No,' said the voter, 'I would sooner vote for the devil.' 'But in the event of your friend not going to the poll I hope you will vote for me.'

The returns coming in show a Liberal majority of forty-eight—English, Scotch, and Welsh votes. Our cousins triumphant everywhere—Edward Grey, Harry Howard, Frederick Mildmay, and Stafford Howard, though my poor friend, Charles Hambro, was beaten.

I still think we shall see Home Rule in some shape or another before the year is out, as Carnarvon seems to think.

On December 15 dined with Wolverton at Brooks's, and afterward joined Herbert Gladstone, Henry James, and E. W. Hamilton. I had a long talk with, or rather listened to, Henry James, who was great on the subject of

Randolph Churchill. He met him at Mr. Oppenheim's the other day, and asked him what they were going to do. He said: 'Everything that will be most disagreeable to you.'

When he was crossing the Channel, Henry James went over with him, and he was nearly dead from sea-sickness, but at Amiens he recovered a little. He had recently made a most violent attack on Lord Granville, and while still sea-green from the effects of the crossing he observed: 'How Granville would like to see me now!'

Henry James gave a capital account of Randolph Churchill's waiting at the Tory Club at Birmingham for the result of the poll, and as each Liberal success was announced he was silent, till his own failure was announced, and then he sprang up and gave them a rattling speech on the 'Advantages of Adversity.'

Matthews, he said, was a good speaker. They had been associates on the Oxford Circuit. At one of his election meetings Matthews touched on Bright very cleverly: 'I was in the Town Hall the other night to hear Mr. Bright,' he said. 'I was reminded of the old instrument

which delighted our grandfathers and grandmothers, but which played one tune—the hurdy-gurdy—and on listening I thought of it, and “Oh dear! oh dear! oh dear!” at the same time imitating the turning of the hurdy-gurdy.

We next discussed the Irish difficulty and how impossible it was to find anybody in Ireland who could be responsible for life and property there. We also dealt with woman suffrage, and James reminded me of our first meeting at Edward Levy's on May 8, 1871.

After, in the smoking-room for an hour and a half's talk with Charles Villiers, who, as usual, was delightful with his recollections of the past; said George Lewis and Gladstone had differed at Eton, at Oxford, and in Parliament; and in the Cabinet, after one of Gladstone's fine speeches, George Lewis used only to say: ‘I disagree with everything that Gladstone has said.’

O'Connell was a greater man than Parnell. In discussing the question of National Debt, he said he would not be dragged into the party details of ‘fiddling finance.’

Lord Palmerston's prophecies of the effect of

abolishing the Irish Church had come true, and he disbelieved in the Irish ever being satisfied with anything. Roebuck had said, in defending the Church Establishment, that 'the people loved it as the place where they had been christened, been married, and been buried!'

Brougham had said: 'Don't abolish it; there is nothing but the Church between us and religion.' He said the feeling against concession to the Irish and the Irish themselves was growing fast. I had seen no proof of it.

We talked of Beau Brummell, Hayward, Fleming, and Charles Greville, who it was supposed got money from his publisher for the promise of his 'Memoirs.' They traded on the vulgarity and snobbishness of the society they lived in. Alvanley and Brummell were both swindlers, the only difference being that the first kept up the premiums of policies on life assurances on which he had raised money; the other did not. Hayward was coarse, and Fleming was a social *flâneur*.

St. Cyres told me next day that his father, Lord Iddesleigh, did not think it possible that the Government could continue.

CHAPTER XXI

JANUARY—JUNE, 1886

Mr. Gladstone's *mauvaise dizaine de jours*—Defeat of the Government—Mr. Gladstone's Summons to Windsor—Miss Mary Gladstone's Wedding—Sir William Harcourt Chancellor of the Exchequer—Letter from Sir Michael Hicks-Beach—The New Cabinet—Contretemps about Lord Granville—Riots of the Unemployed—Financial Conversation with Mr. Chamberlain—First Interview with Sir William Harcourt—Deaths of Lord Cardwell and Napier Sturt—Lady Georgiana Grey—The 'Cottage Budget'—Cabinet Troubles—Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Speech—Mr. Bright and Mr. Gladstone—Illness and Death of Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton—Letter from Sir Erskine May—Conversation with Sir Henry James on the Irish Question—Mr. Gladstone's Indomitable Spirit.

AFTER a charming little holiday at Wanborough I came up alone, as there were still workmen in St. James's, and found a letter from St. Cyres, saying the Government was not likely to last.

These changes are naturally very distasteful to permanent officials; for when a Chancellor of the Exchequer has once matured his plans, it is very annoying to have them all upset and

everything begun *de novo*; besides that, all the old suggestions and ideas are continually being brought up, and have to be discussed anew. Furthermore, I had hoped that the Irish Question might have been set at rest by Lord Salisbury's Government, for Mr. Gladstone had offered to co-operate with him in any attempt to bring it to a settlement, but his proposal had not been accepted.

On January 26 Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone, Arnold Morley, F. Leveson-Gower, and Wolverton dined with us at St. James's; Mr. Gladstone, generally a model of punctuality, kept us waiting till nine o'clock, when he came in looking fagged and weary, having been speaking on Collings' amendment. He told my wife that he had had a *mauvaise dizaine de jours*. He soon returned to the House, saying as he left us that things were looking very serious.

In the morning we learned that the Government had been defeated and would resign; I hoped that they would be forced to remain, and that Sir Michael Hicks-Beach would stay at the Treasury.

Mr. W. H. Smith had been sent to Ireland

about forty hours before the Government defeat, and Sir William Harcourt said that his mission had been conducted on strictly commercial lines of small profits and quick returns.

Sam Whitbread, whom I met, thought that Hartington would join Mr. Gladstone's new Government, which Lord Spencer thought would be satisfactorily formed; of course Ireland would be a fearful difficulty, but Mr. Gladstone's buoyancy, earnestness, and faith would overcome all obstacles.

I soon heard that Lord Hartington would not join. Mr. Gladstone told me in the evening at his house that he should form a Government for two reasons only—the first was that the undue weight attaching to his age might make him the most likely man to settle the Irish Question; the second, that he wished to defer the inevitable split in the Liberal party as long as possible. Chamberlain was cordially in agreement with him now, though he feared that he would not be able to go to the lengths he would probably adopt. Mr. Gladstone's idea of radicalism was bounded by the radicalism of John Bright.

That very night, after we had left Downing Street, Henry Ponsonby arrived with the Queen's summons to Mr. Gladstone, and Arthur Balfour told Arnold Morley that he was sure Mr. Gladstone would succeed in forming an Administration.

As we walked away from dinner one night, I was sorry to hear from George Leveson-Gower that the attacks in the Press on Lord Granville, as Foreign Minister, had much annoyed him, and that he was determined to return as Foreign Secretary.

The next day things were shaping themselves rapidly. Richard Grosvenor told me that Childers would go to the War Office, while he himself was to become a peer and be succeeded as chief Whip by Arnold Morley.

On February 1 Mr. Gladstone went across to Osborne, and kissed hands as First Lord of the Treasury, in his third Administration; Wolverton dined with us, and, needless to say, discussed very fully and freely the situation.

February 2 was a lovely Candlemas Day, and Miss Mary Gladstone's wedding to Mr. Drew was celebrated at Westminster Abbey.

We dreaded the verification of the old Latin saying :

Si sol candescat Mariâ purificante
Majus erit frigus post festum quam fuit ante,

which proved to be true.

After the ceremony we all adjourned to luncheon at Mr. Gladstone's, who asked me whom I should propose as Chancellor of the Exchequer. I humbly suggested Chamberlain, but he thought that the City would be terrified at his views of 'ransom,' while I maintained that a few weeks of official experience would soften the crudeness of his views. However, *Dis aliter visum*, and Sir William Harcourt became Chancellor, while Chamberlain, after refusing to be First Lord of the Admiralty, was relegated, unfortunately, to the Local Government Board.

In a few days I got the following kind letter from Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, on his leaving the Exchequer, alluding to a statement that Chancellors of the Exchequer were in the habit of manipulating, by hastening or retarding it, the collection of the Income Tax, to suit the requirements of their Budgets :

Williamstrip Park, Fairford: February 11, 1886.

‘Dear Mr. West,—The returns, for which I asked you, about the licences, have duly reached me. Many thanks for them; of course, my successor will have copies sent to him also.

‘I had not noticed the article in the “Economist” about income-tax receipts. I do not know whether it would be in your power in any way to get the misconception set right in a future issue of the paper; of course, I do *not* mean by any communication signed by yourself or your colleagues. If it could be done, I think it would be well, mainly to disabuse people of the notion that Chancellors of the Exchequer regulate the collection of taxes.

‘I am very much obliged to you for what you are kind enough to say about the close of our official connection. You have helped me very ably and loyally in more than one matter; and, though I never desire to get back to office, yet if fate should have that misfortune in store for me I hope we may again be associated, with some more practical result than it has been possible to achieve in seven months.—Believe me, yours very truly, ‘M. HICKS-BEACH.’

On February 4 the new Cabinet was announced, and I was pleased to find that, with few exceptions, my prophecies of the *personnel* of the new Government were correct.

I was delighted that Wolverton, who had been seriously offered the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland, was to be the new Postmaster-General, which would suit him much better.

Mr. Gladstone dined with us, but he was very tired and worn—and no wonder, with all the terrible annoyances inseparable from the formation of a new Administration.

It had been settled in a most clumsy manner that Lord Granville was to be superseded at the Foreign Office by Lord Rosebery, a very proper thing, no doubt; but somehow or another Mr. Gladstone had omitted even speaking to him about it. I told him that there was naturally a sore feeling on Lord Granville's part; which made him very unhappy. 'I am quite ready,' he said, 'to let Lord Granville be Prime Minister, and I will be Chancellor of the Exchequer, and you may tell him so from me.' But it was in vain, and Lord Granville became Secretary for the Colonies.

On my way from Somerset House one evening I found that there had been serious riots, from a meeting of the unemployed in Trafalgar Square: all the windows were smashed in Pall Mall, Piccadilly, and Oxford Street. My wife had been in Lady Fanny Marjoribanks' house, where all the windows were broken.

Colonel Henderson, the Chief of the Police, was dismissed after the Pall Mall riots, and it was thought Childers was hard upon him; but men in responsible positions get all the credit when things go right, and so must accept the blame and the consequences when things go wrong.

I had an interesting talk with Mr. Chamberlain on local taxation, and on a graduated income tax. I hope I convinced him that the latter was most inadvisable, if not impossible, arguing that all the efforts of the Revenue authorities had for many years been successfully employed in taking the tax at the fountain head, independently of the destination of the dividends. This made the tax far less unpopular than it would otherwise have been; whereas if it was graduated, every man's income must be

investigated and taxed, and individual payments would have to be made, which would create widespread dissatisfaction, and make the tax a purely voluntary one, irrespective of the safeguards on returns under Schedule 'D.' There were other subjects, such as house tax and death duties, much more suited for graduation, he agreed, and said he did not care what it was as long as graduation was adopted as a principle.

The next day I saw Mr. Fowler, the Secretary to the Treasury, and on the 11th I had my first interview with my new master, Sir William Harcourt, who received me *aux bras ouverts* as 'his guide, philosopher, and friend.' We had a long and smoky talk.

We dined in Downing Street. Lord and Lady Granville and Lord Ripon were there, who said Harcourt had already begun work by discussing his Estimates. Lord Aberdeen, who was just back from Ireland, where he had been sworn in as Lord-Lieutenant, joined us during the evening.

On the first day of the meeting of the new Cabinet news came of poor Lord Cardwell's

death. His mind had latterly given way, but he did not know it, and felt injured at the neglect shown him by his exclusion from office. He had been a great Minister of War, having abolished purchase and established short service, and for the first time in our history, a Reserve Army.

A day or two afterwards we dined at Northbrook's, where we met Sir Henry Norman, the Governor of Jamaica, whose daughter destroyed any illusion I might have had as to the charms of a residence in the West Indies. Lord Derby, Sir Ashley Eden, and Lord Brassey were there also.

I had an interesting conversation at Somerset House with Sir James Allport, the General Manager of the Midland Railway, on Stamp Duties and the advantage that would ensue from their composition, which would induce the railway servants, working men, and others to invest in small sums of Railway Stocks as they did in France. He said we should never see railways really developed until low fares were adopted. During the rate war with the Northern lines, when you could go to York for 1s. 6d., the companies had coined money.

I dined at Lord Ripon's—a large man dinner; sat next Herbert Gladstone, who was very sanguine about Ireland and said that Mr. Gladstone's letter to Lord de Vesci was an attempt to draw Parnell. Mr. Gladstone himself was very hopeful as to ultimate success.

The weather all this time was bearing out the old adage, and the cold strengthened as the days lengthened.

On March 13 we dined at Lady Harcourt's, a large party, where we heard, for the first time, of poor Napier Sturt's death; an amusing and charming companion, always lamenting the sad fate that pursued younger sons; he had lately had a command at Winchester, and had entered into the spirit of it thoroughly, and was, I heard, very particular about conduct and language.

I heard there was to be a petition against my brother Henry at Ipswich, brought about by the foolish conduct of his colleague. He was very low about it, which I was sorry for, as no man ever fought a battle on purity lines so well or so pluckily.

On the 15th we dined at Lady Halifax's, and were glad to meet my wife's aunt, Lady

Georgiana Grey, then eighty-five years old, and wonderfully young for her years. She was a curious type of high breeding and fanciful ideas, and was apt to be somewhat tenacious of her opinions.

On the following day I passed a long time with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in Grafton Street, discussing the Budget, which was, as he said, only to be a 'Cottage Budget.' He maintained that everything in Mr. Gladstone's conduct was governed by two preponderating influences—finance and theology.

Up to March 18 there was still skating in St. James's Park, but on the next day, with glad hearts we welcomed the beginning of spring weather, and on the 20th I took my daughter Constance to Wanborough to see the cottage she had got for her Girls' Home, and found birds singing and shrubs bursting. On our return we dined at Lady Rosebery's, and I sat next to Lady William Compton, who made herself very agreeable by the interest she manifested in a garden at Compton Conyers, where she was going to live. It was a pleasant contrast to the eternal subject of politics, for I

heard things were not going smoothly in the Cabinet, and Chamberlain and Trevelyan would probably resign.

On Saturday we went to Coombe Wood, in which Wolverton had bought a house, and made it very pretty under the artistic guidance of Mr. Devey, the famous architect, with whom our youngest son was working; and on Sunday Arnold Morley and Lord Spencer came down, and discussed the Irish Question from every point of view.

At the end of this long March month, I went with my wife to see a collection of Millais' pictures. How wonderful that a man can be so good and so bad! Gladstone the finest of modern pictures. Lord Beaconsfield as bad as can be.

On April 1 I met Mr. Gladstone, who, notwithstanding all the Cabinet troubles, remained very determined to put forward his scheme for Ireland, even if he stood alone. Eddie Hamilton bet me 6*l.* to 4*l.* that Mr. Gladstone does not carry any scheme for Ireland up to the House of Lords.

The question was before the Cabinet as to

whether Customs and Excise were to be given over to the Irish Government; but happily it was decided to keep them, before I had time to give my opinion on a subject bristling with difficulties.

April 8 was the day fixed for Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule speech, and as I walked down to the House I noticed that Big Ben had stopped rather ominously. The crowd outside was very great, and in the Lobby tremendous, all the Peers and under-the-Gallery people acting exactly as we used to in a 'rouge' at football at Eton. The floor of the House was filled with chairs, for the first time in Parliamentary history, all the way up; many of them having been taken from 5 A.M.

Mr. Gladstone's approach was heralded with cheers—the whole House rising on his entrance, except the front Opposition Bench.

He spoke for three hours and five minutes, his voice, as it always did, getting clearer and stronger to the end. Wolverton came home to dinner, and to describe it all to my wife. With him I went to the G.P.O., to see how Mr. Gladstone's speech had been sent off to the

provinces ; we found when we got there, at ten o'clock, that it had already been received verbatim in every capital in Europe as well as in New York. Then I learnt that under the building there were stowed away 1,000 miles of telegraph wires.

On our way home we met Lord Spencer, who said the only alternative to Mr. Gladstone's scheme would be strong coercion.

The next day we went to Coombe ; and Wolverton calculated that the Government might get a majority of twenty-five, on the second reading of the Bill, but he was always of a singularly sanguine temperament.

On April 12 I was busy all day upon the Revenue clauses for the Irish Bill, and in the evening we dined at Mr. Gladstone's ; Mr. Bright was there, and I thought him very querulous, and Mr. Gladstone was rather short with his querulousness, so altogether the dinner was not as pleasant as usual ; but I went down to the House of Commons and had a little talk with George Trevelyan, who was very despondent and wondered how Mr. Gladstone could have led the Party into such an *impasse* ; and with

Mr. Chamberlain, who said I should live to see the day when finance would be the great question, and a plan I had suggested, of succession duty being paid in kind to Local Boards, which he approved of, might be adopted ; but Mr. Gladstone overshadowed every financier now, and we were always niggling.

Edward Marjoribanks said they must keep the Irish M.P.s in the House, as 100 votes would depend upon their retention ; I, in my ignorance, should have thought the prospect of their absence would have been a tempting bait.

On the 13th, after Harcourt's speech, which was very rallying, the Gladstones, Wolverton, Lady Fanny Marjoribanks, Charles Guthrie, and Frank Mildmay dined with us, and we all went back to the House with Mr. Gladstone. The scheme has many enemies, but no rival, and so 'holds the field'—and I cannot but still hope it may pass the House of Commons, after all these threatenings.

On the 15th, the 'Cottage Budget,' which naturally produced very little comment or controversy, was brought in.

On the 21st, heard to my great grief that

Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton was very ill, but on calling at Brook Street I found Lady Ribblesdale, who was in better spirits and said she was recovering; delighted with the good news, we went off to Wanborough for a little Easter holiday, and on Saturday, the 24th, to Stratton, but on the next—Easter morning—heard that our dear little friend had passed away: she was too angelic and meteoric for this life, and Heaven will be richer for her, but we much poorer.

Sir Erskine May, who had made up his mind to retire, wrote to me in answer to a letter of mine:

Longford House, The Leas, Folkestone: May 4, 1886.

‘Dear Mr. Algernon West,—Pray accept my hearty thanks for your very kind letter.

‘The Civil Service never had so generous a friend and patron as Mr. Gladstone, and I am the latest example of his good-will.

‘My change of destiny has not come a day too soon, for my health has quite broken down lately; I have been laid up here the last fortnight, and at a time when I particularly wished to be in town I am detained here sorely against my will.

‘You may be well content with your son’s position and prospects. Promotion has been slow; but we shall soon be approaching a more ancient *stratum* of official fossils.

‘Yours very truly,

‘T. ERSKINE MAY.’

On May 12 I called in Downing Street and saw Mrs. Gladstone, who begged us to go in the evening as they had a ‘stiff dinner,’ so we dined at home and went there. I talked to Sir Henry James, who told me that he had come to the conclusion that this Irish Question must be settled in one way or another; Lord Hartington did not want to take office, and they could not trust the Tories to deal with so fearful a subject. All the Liberals at Mr. Chamberlain’s meeting, forty-nine or fifty-two, had settled to attend the Hartington meeting, and the result would be a complete disruption of the Liberal party. I asked him whether, seeing this imminent calamity, he could not come to terms. He said the thing was rendered much more difficult by Mr. Gladstone’s overwhelming superiority, which rendered negotiations very difficult, for

they could not ask a man in his position to withdraw the Bill, and they were pledged to vote against the second reading ; but if in some way or another the principle of autonomy could be put forward, the majority, possibly including Hartington, would vote for it, and on it a Bill could be introduced and considered in the autumn Session.

I said that it was ridiculous that he, the cleverest lawyer in England, could not make a bridge if this was all that was wanted. He said it was very difficult to do so.

I spoke about this to Mr. Gladstone, who said the people in the House of Commons were not apt to be so modest about his superiority, but was very much impressed at what I told him ; he did not consider the Bill doomed while many brains were actively engaged in endeavouring to find a *modus vivendi*, notably Mr. Whitbread. He was clearly, I think, ready to postpone to another Session the details of the Bill, if by accepting this compromise the Party could be kept together.

Afterwards, at the Chancellor of the Exchequer's and the Cosmopolitan, where I saw

Herbert Gladstone, who was, as usual, very sanguine.

On Saturday, the 15th, Mr. Gladstone came to Coombe, where my wife and I were. He was in one of his provoking, frivolous moods, making a Cabinet for Hartington, which on the 17th appeared, as he had written it, in the 'Pall Mall Gazette,' and we could not imagine how it got there.

I put before him a resolution which St. Cyres and I had concocted: 'That this House, having recognised the principle of Irish autonomy by reading for a first time the Bill for the Better Government of Ireland, trusts that the present Government, in which it reposes entire confidence, will, in a Session specially devoted to the purpose, introduce measures for establishing a statutory Parliament with defined powers at Dublin, and for securing the just rights and liberties of all creeds and classes of Irishmen.'

Mr. Gladstone said it was too late, he feared, for conciliation, and a Government should not proceed by resolution, which could not pledge the House of Commons to a principle on the

first reading of a Bill. His resolutions on the Irish Church were made when he was in Opposition.

Sir William Harcourt came on Sunday, and of course talked all day and night on the Irish Question.

Great authorities differed on the possibilities of arrangement, but the balance of opinion seemed to me to be against it.

After Easter there was a meeting of the Liberal party at the Foreign Office, which it was hoped might be successful.

One night we met Northbrook at dinner, who told me that Bright said to him that he was old and that he hoped to be forgiven, but he could not get over the conduct of the Irishmen in past days to him; Northbrook himself hoped that the Home Rule Bill would be even now withdrawn.

Edward Marjoribanks told me there were thirty-six men who had not yet bowed the knee to Baal and were unpledged, and still talked of a hope for carrying the second reading: if not there must be an immediate dissolution.

On June 4 Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone, Paul-ton, Edward Grey, and John Morley dined with us, Mr. Gladstone being in great form and spirits, notwithstanding all his anxieties and troubles. Nothing seems to weigh him down.

CHAPTER XXII

JUNE—JULY, 1886

Mr. Gladstone's Sanguine Temper—Scene in the House—Speeches by Mr. Goschen, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Cowen, and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach—Mr. Gladstone's Reply—The Division: Delight of the Unionists—Mr. Gladstone at Coombe Wood: his Opinion of the Inland Revenue and Customs Board—Mr. Gladstone's Desire to help Lord Salisbury—Resignation of Mr. Adam Young: Appointment of Lord St. Cyres as Deputy-Chairman—Letters from Lord Iddesleigh, Mr. Chamberlain, and Mr. Gladstone—Farewell Dinner at Downing Street—Quotation from Sidney Herbert—Lord Herschell's Visit to Wanborough: his Anecdotes—Lord Randolph Churchill appointed Leader and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

IN those early days of June I never heard whether or not Mr. Gladstone anticipated defeat. Everything pointed to it, but I do not think that he admitted its possibility even to a great friend who visited him at Dollis Hill, on the Sunday week before the division, with prophetic warnings.

On the eventful Monday afternoon Arnold Morley, visiting him in Downing Street, found

him absorbed in a French novel and somewhat put out by the interruption.

I heard that members had secured their seats since six in the morning, in anticipation of the division on the Home Rule Bill, and I was apprehensive that I might fail in getting under the gallery, more particularly as I was engaged on a Committee at the Treasury, and only got away from it just in time to find myself in the struggling crowd of Peers and ticket-holders in the lobby of the House of Commons. I succeeded in getting in time to hear a bitter speech of Goschen's, followed by Parnell's wonderfully clear and incisive speech when he made, for the first time, his allusion to the offer he had received from the Conservative party for the complete autonomous government of Ireland.

He was very touching when he taunted Chamberlain with throwing his sword into the scale against Ireland, and dashing from the Irish people the cup of cold water just as it was reaching their lips—'The first cup of cold water that has been offered to our nation since the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam.'

I went away for dinner, still uncertain as to the division, and on my return found my place

under the gallery taken, so I had to go upstairs in the Speaker's gallery, where I heard a rugged and eloquent speech from 'Joe' Cowen, who spoke with a strong Northern accent. It was of him that Disraeli said he had heard he was a good speaker, but as he did not understand his language he was no judge.

On entering the House I saw Wolverton, who was coming out of the chief Whip's room, and he told me there were yet hopes of the Bill being carried—which added to the evening's excitement. None really knew what the result would be, though those behind the scenes had become painfully aware of the probable defeat.

Then a long speech from Sir Michael Hicks-Beach (of which we were to hear more later on), who emphatically denied the overtures of Lord Carnarvon, and then Mr. Gladstone rose amidst torrents of cheers to wind up the debate.

I did not think at the commencement of his speech that he was at his best, but he soon warmed with his subject and was magnificent in voice, in gesture, and delivery.

After his peroration—'Think, I beseech you, think well, think wisely, think not for the moment, but for the years that are to come,

before you reject this Bill'—the House cleared for a division, and we in the gallery, which was crowded to suffocation, were left in a state of profound suspense. I myself had been sitting next to a member who to the last minute was undecided, and told me as he passed to the division how he would vote.

The Bar became jammed, and Mr. Gladstone could hardly make his way through to the front Treasury Bench, where, with a calm face, he commenced writing his letter on his knee to the Queen. I had despaired of the result, and yet I had a particle of hope from Wolverton, and when I saw Edward Marjoribanks, as a splendid illustration of the *mens æqua in arduis*, sit down smiling, as he whispered the result to Mr. Gladstone, that hope, which was so soon to be disappointed, asserted itself more strongly.

Arnold Morley came in, and with Marjoribanks stood at the left of the table, and I knew the game was over—Ayes, 311; Noes, 341.

The Conservatives with their Unionist allies seemed to have gone mad with delirious delight. When they knew the victory was theirs, shouts, in which I am sorry to say the strangers in the

gallery shared, went up for Mr. Gladstone and groans for Mr. Chamberlain, and the curtain of that momentous drama fell.

I walked home with Arnold Morley to Downing Street, through a surging, cheering crowd, heard that Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone were well, and went home feeling assured that a dissolution was not far off.

On June 12 I drove my daughter, Constance, to Lady Wolverton's, Coombe Wood. Mr. Gladstone, who was staying there, had been occupied in writing his Address, but came to tea, and shortly after he asked me to go with him for a walk; talking of his Address, he feared it might be too long, but it was not as long as Mr. Chamberlain's, whose name he had not even mentioned. He had driven home the comparison between Lord Salisbury's and his mode of governing Ireland, the only two alternatives, and sorrowfully admitted that he had lost in this division a great deal of talent.

I told him that Adam Young, my deputy at the Board of Inland Revenue, was going to retire, which he regretted, thinking it a great loss. Then he repeated what he had said to me often

before, that he looked on the Inland Revenue as a model of all that was good.

The Customs Board was, and always had been, very behindhand ; he had never had but one suggestion from them in all his long experience, and that was the penny duty on all packages, which he had at once been forced to give up and run away from, like a dog with its tail between its legs. He wondered at the cause of the difference in the traditions of the two Departments. John Wood and Sir Charles Pressley were very remarkable men and excellent Chairmen of the Board.

I suggested that Lord St. Cyres should succeed Adam Young as deputy, to which he at once agreed.

He asked me about Sir Michael Hicks-Beach as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I told him how pleasant our communications were during the short time he had been in office.

He regretted there was no available financier now. The race was becoming extinct since the days of Peel.

Lord Iddesleigh, he admitted, had all the principles at his fingers' ends, had knowledge,

good sense, and absolute uprightness, but was wanting in strength.

We walked in the lovely wood above the garden for some time, enjoying the splendid views as if politics were not, but we soon drifted again into discussing the elections, when he told me, which I knew before, of his anxiety to help Lord Salisbury on the Irish Question.

On the 14th we went to Holmbury. Mr. Gladstone was very hopeful, and the next day produced his Address. My only criticism was that the world was ignorant of his offer to help Lord Salisbury to deal with the Irish Question, and his Address said nothing of it.

Mr. Gladstone discussed Chamberlain's plan for buying all holdings under thirty acres, etc.

Lord Randolph Churchill, I heard, anticipated that the Tories would come back 300 strong and Unionists 50.

My old friend, Adam Young, to my deep regret, resigned his Deputy-Chairmanship; he was a splendid type of a Civil servant of the old school — upright, conscientious, hard-working, and intelligent, all his thought being in his work; Mr. Gladstone at once, as we had arranged, appointed Lord St. Cyres to be his successor.

Lord Iddesleigh wrote :

Pynes, Exeter : June 29, 1886.

‘ My dear Mr. West,—Let me thank you very sincerely for your kind letter, and not for that alone ; for your friendship and the assistance you have given to Walter in the opening of his career have been of immense value to him, and have made him take a hearty interest in his work. I hope he will long have the privilege of working with you.

‘ Mr. Gladstone’s letter is more than kind, and I have been writing to thank him. I need not say that the promotion is peculiarly gratifying as coming from him.

‘ Rather envying you your quiet post of observation in these stormy days,

‘ I remain, yours very faithfully,

‘ IDDESLEIGH.’

I had inquired into some little matter for Mr. Chamberlain, who, after thanking me, adds characteristically :

‘ What a pretty smash our Chief has made of it ! It is not often given to the leader of a party twice to bring his followers to utter grief by an unexpected *coup-de-main*.’

The elections ended, as we all know, with the defeat of Mr. Gladstone's third Administration, and on July 13 Mr. Gladstone, probably anticipating that Lord Salisbury would again become Prime Minister and Secretary for Foreign Affairs, wrote to me as follows :

Hawarden Castle, Chester : July 12, 1886.

‘ My dear West,—On the formation of the Salisbury Government last year, I thought the arrangement as to the First Lordship of the Treasury highly objectionable on various grounds. But it was not forced on the consideration of the House, as it would be if it were renewed on the next consideration of an Estimate, or as it might be by any one.

‘ Some of the objections are palpable on the surface. But there is one which cannot be fully appreciated, except by persons who have had a large experience either of my Office or of the Foreign Office, where the Foreign Minister is head : (1) The Government must in this country be a Government of Departments ; and (2) There is no one either to assist or at all check the Foreign Minister.

‘As a matter of fairness, I should be glad if, *à propos de bottes* and as matter of history, you could convey the state of my mind.

‘Sincerely yours,

‘W. E. GLADSTONE.

‘P.S. — One does not at once see why Iddesleigh might not take the Foreign Office, especially as his health is not strong.’

On the 23rd I was asked to dine at a farewell dinner in Downing Street: we had dined there at their first, and now at their last party.

On my arrival I was greeted by Mr. Gladstone as ‘Sir Algernon,’ the Queen having approved of my K.C.B., which pleased me and I knew would delight my wife.

Lord and Lady Spencer, Lady Aylesbury, Lord and Lady Dalhousie, Carmichael, Welby, and Eddie Hamilton were there to partake of the funeral baked meats.

I had a discussion as to a quotation from Sidney Herbert with Mr. Gladstone, who was always so accurate that I was frightened, but for a wonder found myself right. Next day I wrote to Mr. Gladstone thanking him for the honour of my

K.C.B., and added a P.S. proving that I was right in the quotation I had made the night before.

Board Room, Somerset House : July 24, 1886.

‘My dear Mr. Gladstone,—A few weeks before his death, Sir Erskine May wrote to me saying, “The Civil Service never had so generous a friend and patron as Mr. Gladstone.”

‘Having experienced at your hands such countless acts of personal kindness, I hope you will allow me to accept the honour you so kindly offered me last night, not as a personal honour to myself, but as a mark of your appreciation of the work done by the Civil Service, and more especially by the Inland Revenue branch of it, in which you have always taken so generous an interest.

‘With many grateful thanks for the honour, the value of which is trebled as coming from you,

‘I am, yours very truly,

‘ALGERNON WEST.

‘P.S.—I inclose the quotation from Mr. Sidney Herbert’s speech to which you alluded last night.

“For it is not words that humiliate but deeds. If a man wants to see humiliation, which God knows is always a painful sight, he need but look there” (pointing to the Treasury Bench).¹

On Saturday I went down to Wanborough with Alfred Lyttelton and Lady Ribblesdale, meeting my son Horace at the station, and telling him of my new honour.

The Herschells came later. I had told my wife that as long as he was Lord Chancellor he would bring with him the Great Seal, not thinking that he really would do so—but he told us it accompanied him wherever he went; and so poor little Wanborough had the honour of having the Great Seal of England under its roof. After tea we all walked over to Puttenham—Herschell as usual full of stories.

In addressing a forger of bank notes, sentenced to death, he told us how a judge had said: ‘I can hold out no hope to you of mercy here, and I must urge you to make preparation for another world, where I hope you may obtain that mercy which a due regard to the credit of our paper currency forbids you to hope for here.’

¹ Right Hon. S. Herbert, November 26, 1852. *Hansard*, p. 613, vol. cxxiii.

With reference to Mr. Gladstone's cruise with Donald Currie, some one had written :

Their places to the North were booked,
Then round the coast they hurried ;
While common folk are only 'Cooked,'
The G.O.M. is 'Curried.'

He told us of an American who had bought some red flannel shirts which were warranted neither to lose their colour nor shrink in the wash. After a fortnight he went to the store where he had purchased them, and was asked by the shopman whether the shirts had lost colour or shrunk. 'All I can say,' he replied, 'is that when I came down with one of them on to breakfast, my wife said to me, "What have you got my pink coral necklace round your throat for?"'

He told us also of a barrister of the name of Jones, whose loquacity Chief Justice Cockburn vainly tried to stem—'The time is passing, Mr. Jones.' 'Let it pass, my Lord,' with a wave of the hand. 'There are three cases on the list after this, Mr. Jones.' 'I, my Lord, have studied the list, and in not one of the three am I or my client interested in the smallest degree.'

On Tuesday we travelled up with John Morley, who had taken a little house at Elstead, a village not far from us. He confirmed what Herschell had told us, that Lord Randolph Churchill was to be leader and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

On July 28 Edward and Lady Fanny Marjoribanks came, and I congratulated her on Lord Randolph's appointment, which she would not at first believe, but a long talk with her about her brother to a great extent allayed my melancholy forebodings of his becoming Chancellor of the Exchequer. A few days after I heard from Welby of his first pleasant interview with the new Chancellor, and the next day I saw Lord Randolph, and was struck with his extreme courtesy and somewhat old-fashioned manners and dignified solemnity.

CHAPTER XXIII

JULY—DECEMBER, 1886

Lord Randolph and the Old Officials—Their Dismay and Reconciliation—Interviews in the Board Room and at Connaught Place—The ‘Fourth Party Sofa’—Lord Randolph and the Decimals—His Assiduity and Concentration—Propositions for the Budget—Economy his Ruling Idea—His Visits to Somerset House and the Custom House—His Sudden Resignation—His Personal Relations with his Opponents and Mr. Gladstone—His Attacks on Mr. Gladstone’s Transvaal Policy and subsequent Retracting—His Sense of Humour and Gifts as a Phrase-coiner—Mr. Gladstone’s Letter to his Mother—Mr. Gladstone at Wanborough: Writes his Farewell Address on leaving Office—Deputation from Guildford—Visit to the Italian Lakes—Death of George Barrington—Lord Granville’s Anecdotes of Charles Greville—Mr. Ralston at the Holborn Restaurant—*L’Envoi.*

UP to this time we old officials who had been educated in the school of Lord Palmerston, Lord John Russell, Mr. Gladstone, and Sir Stafford Northcote, regarded Lord Randolph as an impossible man, ‘whose breath was agitation and his life a storm on which he rode.’ He was to our eyes a visible genius, an intense and

unquenchable personality, an embodied *tour de force*; but as a serious Minister of the Crown he was to us an impossibility. In his fierce assaults on Mr. Gladstone he had attacked the best friend the Civil Service ever had; and it was a moot point which was in greater dread—we of his entrance within the portals of a Government department, or he of having to associate in daily business with men whom he curtly described to a friend as ‘a knot of d——d Gladstonians.’ He was a man to whom the words of Hookham Frere in ‘Monks and Giants’ might as suitably be applied as they were to that kindred spirit, the brave and fiery Peterborough:

His birth, it seems, by Merlin’s calculation
Was under Venus, Mercury, and Mars;
His mind with all their attitudes was mixed,
And like those planets wandering and unfixed.
His schemes of war were sudden, unforeseen,
Inexplicable both to friend and foe.
He seemed as if some momentary spleen
Inspired the project and impelled the blow.

Such was the impression we had of him, not unnatural and certainly not wholly wrong. But there were other aspects to his many-sided nature—the reckless knight-errant of debate

proved at the same time a patient, strenuous, thorough, and far-sighted administrator.

Lord Randolph, between the fall of the Tory Government and his return to office as Chancellor of the Exchequer, had made himself the mouthpiece of an attack with a venom not his own on the Chairman and Deputy-Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue. 'Those were,' as he said, 'my ignorant days.' When he assumed office as Chancellor of the Exchequer, notwithstanding the reputation he had made for himself at the India Office, he still appeared to the minds of Treasury officials as a Minister who would in all probability ride roughshod over cherished traditions and habits which were very dear to them. That such a man, with all his faults and glaring indiscretions, whose inclinations became passions, should have attached to himself a body of men like the Civil Service of this country, was little short of a miracle. A Frenchman, in a conversation with Pitt at the end of the last century, expressed his surprise at the influence which Charles Fox, a man of pleasure ruined by the dice-box and the turf, had exercised over the English nation. 'You have

not,' was the reply, 'been under the wand of the magician.' It was not long before those who were brought into close communication with Lord Randolph fell under his magic spell. I confess that I, at that time Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, was as much dismayed as any man at the prospect of his becoming Chancellor of the Exchequer. I was soon reconciled, and I well remember our first interview in the old historical Board Room at the Treasury, the stiff and formal cut of his frock coat—the same that he always wore when he was leader of the House—and the somewhat old-world courtesy of manner with which he received me at the door. But it was not long before he produced the new-world cigarette-case and the long mouth-piece, which so soon became familiar. A very few meetings were enough to show me how sincerely anxious he was to learn all the little I had to teach; and from that first hour our acquaintance gradually ripened into a friendship which not all the vicissitudes of his stormy life, nor even his agonising illness, ever interrupted. The last letter he wrote before he left England on his sad journey was to me. In it he spoke

of our long years of friendship, of his return, and of years to come ; but the handwriting told how impossible that return and those future years were to be.

Our early official meetings at the Treasury were soon superseded by more intimate conversations at Connaught Place. On my first visit there I found him in a room bright with electric light, and the eternal cigarette in his mouth. He was seated in a large armchair having a roomy sofa on one side, which I afterwards learnt was known in the family as the 'Fourth Party sofa,' and on the other, much to my surprise, a large photograph of Mr. Gladstone. Whether the photograph and the sofa were thus placed opposite each other for the convenience of the party in rehearsing their attacks I do not take it upon me to say. Although Lord Randolph certainly had never made a study of finance, he was not, when he became Chancellor of the Exchequer, so ignorant of it as Charles Fox, if the story be true which reports him to have said that he never could understand what Consols were—he knew they were things that went up and down in the City ; and he was always

pleased when they went down, because it so annoyed Pitt. A story is also told of Lord Randolph, that a Treasury clerk put some figures before him. 'I wish you would put these figures plainly so that I can understand them,' he said. The clerk said he had done his best, and he had, pointing them out, reduced them to decimals. 'Oh!' said Lord Randolph, 'I never could understand what those d——d dots meant.' But it soon became clear that besides a wonderful intuition, Lord Randolph possessed many of the qualities which had always won for Mr. Gladstone so high a reputation as a departmental chief—indefatigable assiduity, that energy which Dr. Arnold said is of more value than even cleverness, a vehement determination to learn his subject *ab ovo usque ad mala*, a strong intellectual force, which, while it in no way interfered with his attention to the opinions of his subordinates, absolutely preserved his own independence of judgment and decision. He possessed the very rare gift of keeping his mind exclusively devoted to the subject in hand, and impressed on all those with whom he worked the idea that the business on which they were employed was

the only one of interest to him. For a man of his rapid thought and excitable temperament he was scrupulously patient and quiet in discussion; and from frequent conversations with him on financial subjects I can safely affirm that no one ever ended an official interview with him without at any rate having arrived at a clear knowledge of his views and intentions. No time spent with him was ever wasted, nor would he suffer any interruption, from whatever source it came.

In the autumn preceding the session of 1887 he knew that the duties of leadership would absorb all his time and strength, and, like a wise and prudent statesman, he prepared himself for his financial statement by a performance such as was never equalled, in getting ready and passing through the Cabinet the Budget for the forthcoming year. On the evening of the day on which he carried his Budget through the Cabinet, after describing to me how he had done so, he said: 'There in that box are all the materials of our Budget. They are unpolished gems; put the facets on them as well as you can, but do not speak to me on the subject again

till the end of the financial year.' What that Budget was cannot yet be told; but it may be fairly said that it far exceeded in importance any Budget since Mr. Gladstone's great performance in 1860. It was often said that Lord Randolph won his popularity among the permanent officials by his subservience to their views. Nothing could be further from the truth; and when some day his Budget comes to light, as I trust it will, it will be seen how original were some of its provisions, and how unlike to any plans that would probably have emanated from the ordinary official brain.

From the very commencement of his career as Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Randolph began his struggles for economy, his love for which was sincere and earnest. He determined that as long as he was responsible for the finances of the country he would enforce it. It has often been the subject of discussion whether a man who is careful in his domestic affairs would naturally be an economist in public affairs, and *vice versâ*. No one would ever have accused Lord Randolph of being a careful or even a prudent man in the management of his private

concerns, but his ruling idea as Chancellor of the Exchequer was for economy.

In a letter he wrote to me shortly after his resignation, Lord Randolph said: 'The Budget scheme we had in contemplation will now be relegated to the catalogue of useless labour. The essential principle of any financial policy which I cared to be identified with was zeal for thrift and economic reform. This was wanting, and the scaffolding was bound to come down.' It was the extravagance of the spending department that induced him to write that fatal letter which could only bring about his absolute supremacy or his resignation. No new fancy it was that dictated it. In October 1886 he had said that 'unless there was an effort to reduce the expenditure it was impossible that he could remain at the Exchequer.' Again he said: 'If the decision of the Cabinet as to the amount of the Estimates was against him, he should not remain in office.' I recollect after his fall his appealing to me and saying that I knew his resignation was not the consequence of a moment's irritation, but was from his deliberate determination that in matters financial he

would be supreme. This I was able fully to endorse.

On December 20, ever anxious to learn all he could by personal study, he spent nearly three hours with me at Somerset House, seeing for himself all the working of that huge department. The following day he went to the Custom House, and that same afternoon to Windsor, where he wrote the letter to Lord Salisbury which has since become historical, threatening his resignation. On the evening of the 22nd he walked down to Printing House Square and communicated what he had done to the editor of the 'Times.' Then, on the 23rd, I got the sad and startling news of his resignation. In a note which followed close upon it, his secretary, Mr. A. Moore, who by his ability and devotion had contributed so much to Lord Randolph's fame, said: 'I have really not the heart to write anything. Moreover, there is nothing to add to what was said in that terribly irregular and premature *communiqué* to the "Times." I look upon the whole thing, from every point of view—patriotic, party, and personal—as simply an irreparable calamity.'

It is strange that a man endowed by Nature with quick perception should not have seen how gladly Lord Salisbury would dispense with his services, or should have forgotten Sir Stafford Northcote's prophecy and hope in 1880, that a Conservative cave would be formed on the Liberal side with Goschen in its centre.

So Lord Randolph became officially dead, and a cruel fate has made him one of the great might-have-beens in the financial history of his country, for the triumph and the harvest of the seed he had sown he did not live to see. From his fall to his tragic end he bore with him to the grave much affection, much admiration, and many regrets of true friends and political opponents. He might have used the words put into the mouth of the unfortunate Queen Mary by Schiller : 'I have been much hated, but I have been much beloved.'

Nothing, I am sure, is more curious in political biography than the fascination Lord Randolph Churchill possessed over his political opponents. Notwithstanding his exaggerated invective, Mr. Gladstone could not altogether

resist the charm and sympathetic genius of his younger opponent.¹ He frankly and fully admired Lord Randolph's short leadership of the House of Commons, his insight, and his dash and courage, and he sympathised with his not unsuccessful struggles over his beloved economy. Modesty is not, perhaps, among the virtues attributed to Lord Randolph; but there was some far-off touch of it in a letter he wrote to me, in which he says: 'I am not so conceited as to suppose that Mr. Gladstone could care for or even notice any speech of mine.' But Mr. Gladstone did notice the rising man, and, turning to a colleague on the occasion of one of Lord Randolph's early speeches, he said propheti-

¹ The friendly personal relations that prevailed between Mr. Gladstone and Lord Randolph Churchill are illustrated by an incident which I repeat on the authority of an eye-witness. Mr. Gladstone was replying at length to an impeachment of the Liberal policy by Mr. Balfour, and Lord Randolph, who was about to follow, was in a state of preparatory fidget. He had a glass of water sent in, at sight of which Mr. Gladstone stooped and whispered to Sir William Harcourt, obviously declaring his need for similar refreshment. Lord Randolph immediately rose, proffered his untasted glass across the table, which Mr. Gladstone graciously accepted, observing with genial emphasis, 'I wish that the noble lord was always as ready to drink at my fountain-head as I am at his,' a remark which Lord Randolph acknowledged with a low bow, amid the general applause of the House.

cally: 'That is a young man you will have to reckon with one of these days.' They met several times, and Mr. Gladstone often spoke in warm terms about the power Lord Randolph possessed of making himself loved and respected by the various heads of departments in which he worked, of his aptitude for learning, of his admirable and courageous work towards economy, of his personal courtesy and his pre-eminent qualities as a host, which could not be exaggerated. And Lord Randolph's admiration for Mr. Gladstone was unbounded and sincere. I recollect on one occasion when Mr. Gladstone had been talking after dinner, as the men were leaving the room, Lord Randolph said to a Unionist friend: 'And that is the man you have left! How could you have done it?'

Dr. Johnson said: 'When I was beginning the world and was nobody and nothing, the joy of my life was to fire at all the established wits, and then everybody loved to halloo me on.' Disraeli followed the great Doctor's example in his attacks on Peel; and Lord Randolph, probably with similar motives, attacked Mr. Gladstone with an exaggeration we now all deplore.

But if Lord Randolph was violent and even unscrupulous at times in his attacks, when a conviction came to him that he had been mistaken he was generous in acknowledging it. In language of real eloquence he had denounced the policy of Mr. Gladstone's Government in the Transvaal. But when years afterwards he was face to face with the facts on the spot, he wrote a letter to a London newspaper which attracted great attention at the time, and which contained a retractation of the rash judgment he had pronounced, so complete and at the same time so judicious that it is well worthy of being remembered at the present critical juncture in our relations with that Republic.

‘The surrender of the Transvaal [he wrote], and the peace concluded by Mr. Gladstone with the victors of Majuba Hill, were at the time, and still are, the object of sharp criticism and bitter denunciation from many politicians at home, *quorum pars parva fui*. Better and more precise information, combined with cool reflection, leads me to the conclusion that had the British Government of that day taken advantage of its strong military position and annihilated,

as it could easily have done, the Boer forces, it would indeed have regained the Transvaal, but it would have lost Cape Colony. . . . The actual magnanimity of the peace with the Boers concluded by Mr. Gladstone's Ministry after two humiliating military reverses suffered by the arms under their control became plainly apparent to the just and sensible mind of the Dutch Cape Colonist, atoned for much of past grievance, and demonstrated the total absence in the English mind of any hostility or unfriendliness to the Dutch race. Concord between Dutch and English in the Colony from that moment became possible.'

A retractation so generous and hearty as this covers a multitude of rash vituperations.

In his strongest political animosities Lord Randolph ever retained his sense of humour. Indeed, I should have thought that no one could ever have doubted his sense of humour; yet in the obituary notice in one of the leading papers it was said he was totally devoid of it. Not only had he a sense of humour, but he is one of the few Parliamentarians who have left sayings that have become proverbial. The elder of his col-

leagues were known as 'the old gang;' the Unionists as the 'crutch of the Tory Party.' His was the mint from which came 'the mediocrities with double names,' 'the old man in a hurry,' 'the duty of an Opposition is to oppose,' and many more.

It seems a paradox in God's providence that a man of genius, great talent, and splendid promise should in the prime of his life have been stricken down by a disease which appears cruel to us who see only through a glass darkly. But as the late Cardinal Manning finely said: 'As in a piece of tapestry, where on one side all is a confused and tangled mass of knots, and on the other a beautiful picture, so from the everlasting hills will this earthly life appear not the vain and chanceful thing men deem it here, but a perfect plan guided by a Divine hand unto a perfect end.'

When present at his funeral service in the Abbey, I could not but think sadly of what he many times said humorously: 'Mr. Gladstone will long outlive me; and I often tell my wife what a beautiful letter he will write on my death, proposing my burial in Westminster Abbey.' I

cannot better conclude this inadequate sketch than by quoting the words used by Mr. Gladstone in writing to his poor mother :

‘ You followed your son at every step with, if possible, more than a mother’s love ; and, on the other hand, in addition to his conspicuous talents, he had gifts which greatly tended to attach to him those with whom he was brought into contact. For my own share, I received many marks of his courtesy and kindness, and I have only agreeable recollections of him to cherish.’

Early in August 1886 my wife and daughter went into Guildford to meet Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone, who had driven over from the Wolvertons at Coombe. They had tea at the Guildford Club, where they were discovered and much cheered ; they then came on to Wanborough, John Morley arriving, with Welby, for dinner.

Mr. Gladstone was in good spirits, saying good finance consisted more in the spending than the collecting of revenue. As John Morley went away he said : ‘ I wonder if I should not have been happier writing obscure philosophical works which nobody would read on the Hog’s

Back, than leading a political life.' He had once lived there in a little house which belonged to my uncle, Mr. Long. It was then called Long's Hotel, but when John Morley took it its name was changed into Morley's Hotel.

The next day my wife took Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone to a party at Puttenham Priory, and on my return from London Mr. Gladstone and I walked, and talked to the old bailiff Callingham of his early days—wheat 45*s.*, sugar 16*d.*, no meat, and wages 7*s.* a week. And on this he married and throve!

While at Wanborough, Mr. Gladstone wrote his farewell address on leaving office, in the little yellow dressing-room. He said at last everybody was now for Home Rule in some form or another. If Parnell would accept a Parliament in Dublin, subject to Parliament in England, it might lead to an agreement.

We played whist in the evening, and the next day Welby and I, who had spent the day in London at our respective offices, came down in the evening and rode over to meet my wife and the Gladstones at Busbridge—where Ellis

Gosling lived with his mother, Mrs. Ramsden—coming back by Elstead, where John Morley was staying.

On our return a deputation from Guildford, with a sketch of the town and an address, was awaiting us. Mr. Gladstone, who I supposed thought of the saying, *mox adorant mox lapidant*, was annoyed, and would not see them at first, so my daughter had to receive them, and make excuses; but at last Mr. Gladstone was persuaded to say a few words, which sent them away rejoicing.

Arnold Morley came the following day, on which Mr. Gladstone planted a golden yew, and Mrs. Gladstone an *arbor vitæ*, on the lawn, which I am happy to say are flourishing to this day.

As Parliament was still sitting, I had to stay in London till September 25, when Horace and I started for the Italian lakes, stopping at Lucerne, Baveno, Milan, Caddenabia, which we thought lovely; then Milan, again Verona, and Venice, in which we were much disappointed, as it rained nearly all the time, and Horace de-

scribed our gondola journeys as if we were going about the sewers in a hearse all day. This was, no doubt, a libel; but we were so depressed that we beat a hasty retreat, and went to Bologna and Florence, which we loved.

While at Hayes, where we went after our return, we heard of George Barrington's death. He was very good-looking, very agreeable, and very popular, cultivating with great success the pleasant *rôle* of a cosmopolitan—getting all the best he could out of society of all nations and men of every shade of politics, though he was a Tory, associated in confidential relations with Lord Beaconsfield. His death made another gap in the fast diminishing number of the dandies of St. James's Street. On November 12 I went with many of his friends to his funeral at Beckett.

On November 16 I went to Windsor for my investiture as a Knight Commander of the Bath, Henry Ponsonby kindly giving General St. George Foley and myself a little rehearsal of the ceremony before we were ushered into her Majesty's presence.

On the 25th Lord Granville and Sir George

Dasent came to dinner unexpectedly. I fetched the Ribblesdales and the Beerbohm Trees—who were at the Haymarket—to tea, and had a most successful evening.

Lord Granville was full of anecdotes, which he always delivered in the most charming way. Some were of Charles Greville's grumpiness.

Dining one night at Baron Rothschild's, he was asked to take in Lady ——

'Certainly not,' he said; 'I hardly know if I can take myself in.'

Another evening, when sitting next to a pretty woman, he complained of not knowing anybody.

'But you know me?' she said. 'I am Mrs. ——'

'That does not make me any the wiser,' he grunted.

Madame ——, discussing French and English marriages, said to her neighbour, who preferred the English custom:

'But would you not like to have the first love of your wife?'

'I should prefer the last,' he said.

In December, on the evening of the 15th, I

made my first public speech at a Civil Service dinner, and was vain enough to be pleased with it.

On entering the Holborn Restaurant, where our dinner was to take place, I was met by Mr. Ralston, the Russian scholar, with whom I had a slight acquaintance. He told me he was to propose the toast to which I was to reply, and kindly suggested that I might tell him how I proposed to begin and he would work up to it. I was much pleased until he rose, and from forgetfulness, I suppose, took the sentence I had told him, word for word, leaving me at the last moment to find a new beginning to my speech. I forgave him more readily for some excellent stories he told us of his travels in Russia. On one occasion he met a body of miserable peasants, many of them handcuffed, being driven by soldiers along the road like cattle. 'Who are these prisoners?' he asked of the officer. 'Prisoners!' said the officer, 'these are not prisoners—they are Volunteers hastening to the front!'

And now my pen must be laid aside for a time. Voltaire it is, I think, who propounds the axiom that a man who says all he has got

to say must be a fool. I have not said all I have got to say, but it does not follow that I am not a fool, for I may have written nothing which is worth the reading.

When a private secretary, I avoided, on principle, keeping any diaries, for I held that the secrets that necessarily came in my way were not my secrets, and should never be disclosed through any instrumentality of mine. I hope that no indiscretions have crept into these volumes. I trust, too, that in them will be found nothing that can cause pain to any living soul, although I fear on that account they will be thought lacking in novelty and piquancy. They tell of many things and of many people of whom the existing generation knows little, whose names they may have heard and that is all. But to those of an older time there may arise from the reading of these pages old familiar faces, old-fashioned customs which are out of date, and places which were dear to them in their youth.

Old stories may recall the happy times when they were told, amid laughter and merriment, by friends long forgotten to friends long dead.

Their brilliance passes in the telling, and cannot return in its perfection, but the echo may awaken some recollections of a time when we also basked in the glorious sunshine of youth before failures and disappointments and sorrows came upon us.

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